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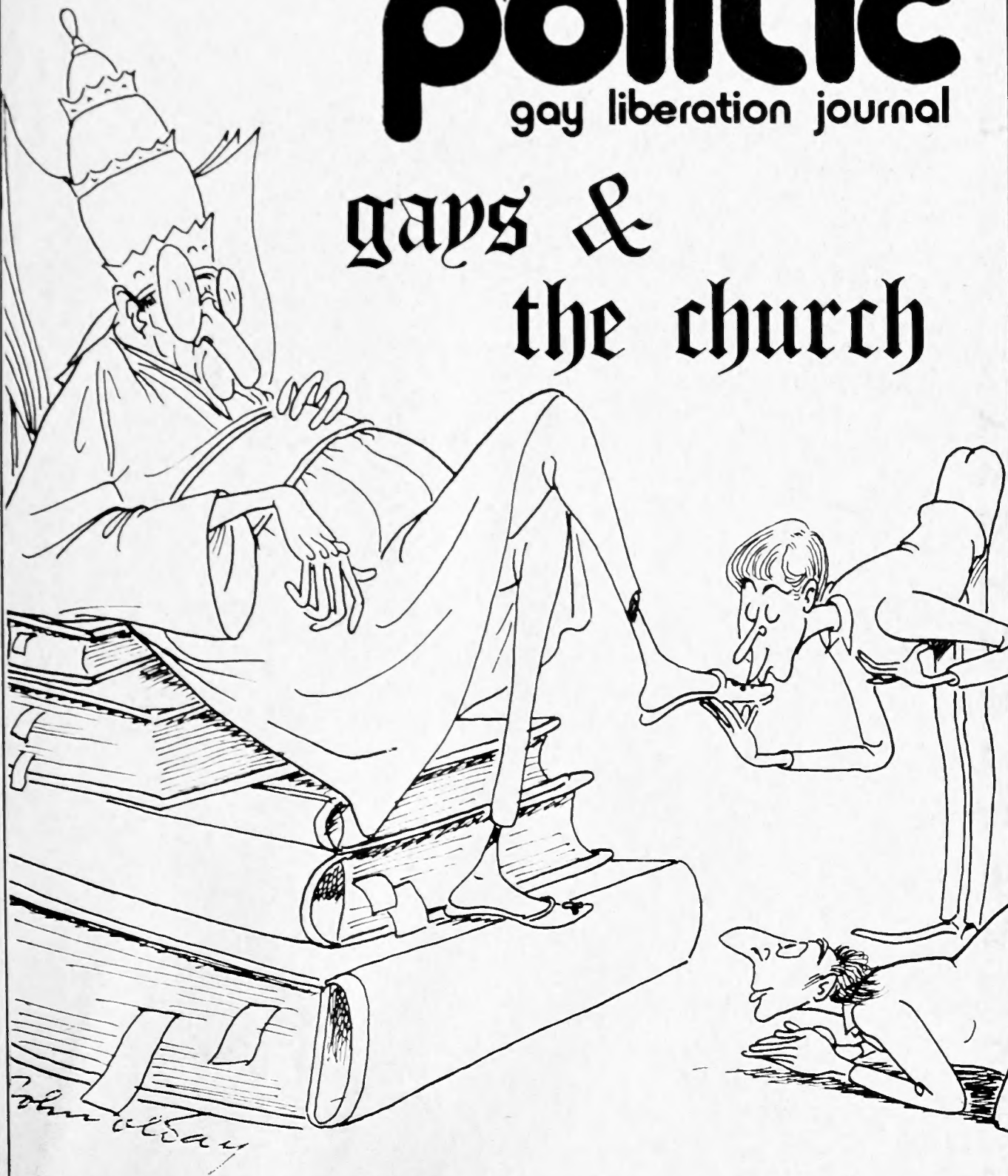
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the body politic

gay liberation journal

gays & the church





editorial contradictions

Since the Metropolitan Community Church established a branch plant in Toronto a year ago, it has endeavoured to become a leading force in the gay community. Its bi-weekly publication, Metropolitan Community News, is widely distributed in this city's bars and baths. The local Pastor has struggled to give the church a high public profile in an attempt to win acceptance within the gay and straight communities. As a result of these efforts, MCC appears to be acquiring a small, but nonetheless solid, following within the gay ghetto. To date, the gay movement has not come to terms with MCC as a phenomenon in the gay community. It is, therefore, time to do so.

MCC is an institution which displays two noteworthy characteristics. First it is not a democratic institution. Although there are mechanisms for input from its members, its decisions and policies are formulated at the top and passed down. Second, MCC is an institution with a message. In this, it resembles many ideology-oriented organizations all across the political spectrum, including those which make up the gay liberation movement.

MCC, indeed, has two distinct messages to offer to its members and the world at large.

It affirms that gay is good. It shares this message with other organizations of the gay liberation movement and it is on this that its legitimacy as part of the gay liberation movement rests.

The second message broadcast by MCC is something more diffuse and ambiguous: the content of Christian belief. This is what MCC has in common with other Christian churches.

In coming to terms with MCC, the movement has to ask whether the two distinct messages of the Church are in conflict.

It is our belief that the contradictory nature of MCC's two messages is clear. One may quibble about the precise content of Christianity, but most would agree that the New Testament is its basis. That work contains statements which directly contradict the notion that gay is good. Of course, we could overlook the explicit antihomosexual passages. In a more radical reform, we could even toss St. Paul overboard entirely. But what remains is a body of teachings informed in its essence by negation of the material world, of the body, of sexual pleasure, of nonprocreative sex. "In the beginning was the Word" -- the word not the world, the real world in which people live, die, suffer and torment. Christianity is thus both antipolitical and antixsexual. Christian belief and gay liberation are contradictory.

MCC stands with one foot in gay liberation and the other in Christian faith. Both MCC as an institution and its members as individuals are conflicted.

Forced to a choice, which way will MCC move? Reverend Wolfe, minister of the Toronto congregation, has already given the answer: "We're not so much of a gay church as a Christian church administering to gay needs."

Kurt Hiller (1886-1972) was a leader of the Scientific & Humanitarian Committee, a German gay rights organization whose appearance in 1897 marked the birth of the gay liberation movement. A pacifist and women's rights advocate, Hiller was obviously not opposed to alliances between the gay struggle and other forces for social progress. But he warned gays against relying on liberal 'friends' for their rights and saw that autonomous gay organization was a prerequisite to gay liberation. "In the final analysis", he said, "justice for you will be the fruit only of your own efforts".

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the body politic

is published six times a year so that gay people in Canada have a means of talking to each other about themselves and about their relationship to society. The Body Politic cannot speak for all segments of the gay community; it is our intention to promote the interests of gay people.

Editorial control of The Body Politic is exercised by The Body Politic Collective, a group of people who regularly give their time and labour to the production of the paper. The Collective makes no profit. One collective member, who spends a full business day at the office and has no other income, is paid a small salary. All other income is spent on The Body Politic or on other aspects of the gay liberation movement. The Collective's office is located at 193 Carlton Street in Toronto.

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"THE LIBERATION OF HOMOSEXUALS CAN ONLY BE THE WORK OF HOMOSEXUALS THEMSELVES" -- KURT HILLER, 1921

letters

an issue of prime importance

I want to congratulate The Body Politic on the excellent and most welcome special issue on the Toronto press' attempt to whip up a witch-hunt against gays. The pointing up of the Star's crudely dishonest tactics in all their dreariness was particularly amusing and to the point.

It's become very obvious that the issue of pederasty is of prime importance for the gay liberation movement. The liberal establishment is willing to extend a certain amount of tolerance to 'adults' as long as those under age 21 are firmly under physical control. Only by the perpetuation of that 21-year total control can a repressed, violent, work-and-obedience orientated citizenry be maintained; and that is why the Powers get so upset when anyone suggests that even basic personal freedoms be extended to children and teenagers.

My small press, Catalyst (still, unfortunately, Canada's only gay publishing house), has issued a number of pederast-oriented literary works (Graham Jackson's *The Apothecary Jar*, E.A. Lacey's *Path of Snow*, my own *Some Green Noths*).

I was disgusted though not surprised, that the Toronto HCC has hurried to denounce The Body Politic for its stand: more evidence, if any were needed, that when a choice must be made between Christian moralising and gay liberation (or even human decency) the 'gay church' will opt for the oppressors.

Ian Young

a letter to The Star

Here follows a copy of my letter to the Toronto Star regarding their editorial of Saturday October 19, 1974.

Voice of the People;

I've just read with great amusement your funny little article on Homosexuality. It seems that the Star will not take any advertisements from The Body Politic or any other established Homophile agencies.

All one has to do is turn to the classified ads to see

what outright bullshitting liars you people really are. Please check The Toronto Star, Page C6, Saturday October 19. At the end of the Business Personal column you will see an ad which reads: **YOUNG BODYBUILDER, WILL DO ANYTHING LEGAL FOR MONEY, (Phone number.)**

His name is B---, and he really isn't very young, but he will do anything!! Young or old, it doesn't make any difference to him. He caters exclusively to a male clientele, and I will leave it up to your provincial imaginations to determine just what his services might be.

I was only seventeen years old when I first visited B---. I found out about him in the Toronto Star; perhaps if the Star had taken ads from The Body Politic or other agencies I might have gone there and received some good counselling.

Too bad eh?

Unsigned.

pedophilia is 'dangerous'

In his latest paean to pedophilia Gerald Hannon would have us accept that "sexual relationships aren't intrinsically dangerous." Frankly, I don't know what that means. The value of every human encounter, sexual or otherwise, can only be determined from its context. The psychological context of a sexual act between an adult and a pre-pubescent child offers the latter such a distorted view of a human relationship that he may adopt exceedingly bleak views of all human relationships, views which can endure long after the experience has faded from consciousness. Hence we see such a sexual act as 'dangerous'.

The very fact that the sex is between an adult and a small child ensures that fear will play an undue part in the liaison. The child is looking for a friendship. The larger creature is out to gratify genital lust, something of which the child has no experience. He cannot know what the adult wants. Nor is the child likely to feel in a position to terminate the encounter. He is trapped. The average person is alienated enough from his body without being taught that it is just another tool for pleasing/appealing the powerful and subjugating the weak.

Also, the paedophile, in most instances, doesn't give a damn about the kid with whom he is having sex. One

doesn't feel concern or love on a one-to-one basis for hundreds of children. The child is not seen as an individual. He is only an actor in the adult's fantasies. Thus the sex experience is depersonalising.

I wonder what benefits supposedly accrue to the child from these encounters. Is the child in some sense liberated from the family? If so, he is liberated into something no better, if not worse.

Finally, I do not accept Mr. Hannon's suggestion that children are out there just begging for 'it'. He offers as evidence our own memories of childhood. Does he think memory an objective record of past reality? Memory is a set of abstractions manufactured or dredged up in response to some need. Mr. Hannon should examine himself rather more carefully. The projection of his own adult sexual drives onto a youngster's curiosity and friendliness seems obvious.

M. J. McCreavy

was Christ a homosexual?

Several years ago, the Canon Rev. Hugh M--- said in a lecture at Great St Mary's University Church (Cambridge) (England) that Jesus Christ might have been homosexual. Our small town newspaper, The St. Thomas Times-Journal carried the headline "Clergyman says Jesus Christ a Homosexual". It then reported that the clergyman's Archbishop reprimanded him, and prohibited the publication of the lecture.

I was teaching ontological and occult metaphysics at the time. I wrote the clergyman, stating that I fully agreed with him, and that he was justified in saying what he believed. The life and teaching of Jesus, and the closeness and intimacy of John, his favorite disciple, show the affinity between these two men. John was a deeply affectionate and spiritual man who understood that man is both human and divine. Jesus taught this. **JESUS NEVER CONDEMNED THE SEXUAL ACTIVITIES OF MANKIND.** Paul did. I have known several clergymen who did not follow Paul's epistles. Paul in effect usurped the power of God, in his judgements.

As well it is enlightening to consider the relationship between Jonathan and King

David. According to Ferrar Fenton's translation: "Jonathan scrippeth off his princely garments even to his girdle, and placed them at David's feet." Jonathan then said: "David, my love for thee is stronger than the love of a man for a woman."

There may be a degree of comfort for your readers in the knowledge that an orgasm can occur when one is in deep meditation on Spiritual Love. (See 1 John Chap. 4, also John Chap. 13, v 23-26 and Chap. 19, v 26). Meditating on the love exemplified in the relationships between Jesus and John, and David and Jonathan, we know that Love cannot be separated from eroticism.

Lawrence H. Millett
(Rev. retired)
London, Ontario

precarious proposition

In view of The Star's reaction to Gerald Hannon's article on John Roestad, I should like to comment on The Body Politic's general stance. As an example I will pick on the review of "The Devil in Miss Jones" (DMJ) in your last issue.

"Bijou", as well as "Boys" have not been "boring Toronto" to gay audiences since last fall", at least they have not been boring me. Doesn't the reviewer see that these films make a statement about a potentially beautiful manifestation of sexuality that is certainly less oppressive than that of two gays getting married and showing the world that they can play the responsible couples game too (BP, #12)?

These films transcend emotions and fears as portrayed in DMJ. What is repulsive about DMJ is not its sexism, as the reviewer indicates in an attempt to be fair to women, but rather its profoundly irrational hostility toward sex. If horny, a man will leave DMJ with a roaring hard-on, just as he will after seeing "Bijou". The difference is that the last shot in "Bijou" is a smile of liberation, whereas the final scene in DMJ shows the phony-existential eternal unfulfillment of a woman's sexual desire. Bijou leaves one with a feeling that sexuality, relatively unburdened by this society's myths, could be a way of feeling free and good. DMJ leaves one with the schizophrenic feeling that uninhibited sex

(continued on page 26)

the community page

St John's

CANADIAN HOMOPHILE ASSOCIATION
OF NEWFOUNDLAND
Box 613, 690
St. John's, Newfoundland A1C 5X8

Halifax

GAY ALLIANCE FOR EQUALITY
Box 161, 161 Adelaide Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3L 4G9
(902) 423-7657

Fredericton

GAY FRIENDS
386A Saunders Street
Fredericton, New Brunswick E3B 1N6
(506) 465-4707, 464-4472

Quebec

CENTRE HUMANITAIRE D'ALDE
ET DE LIBERATION
CP 596 Haute Ville
Quebec, PQ G1R 4H8
(418) 525-4457

Montreal

FRONT HOMOSEXUEL QUEBECOIS
DE LIBERATION
c/o Gai Lovio-Goyette
2126 rue Albert
Montreal, Quebec H2L 3L8
SERVICE D'ORIENTATION HOMOPHILE
MONTREAL HOMOPHILE COUNSELLING
c/o Gai Lovio-Goyette
Montreal, Quebec H2X 2L4
(514) 942-97512

MONTREAL GAY WOMEN
c/o Gai Lovio-Goyette
Montreal, Quebec H2X 2L4
(514) 943-4902
ASSOCIATION HOMOPHILE DE MONTREAL
GAY MONTREAL ASSOCIATION
3664 rue Ste-Famille
Box 694, Ste N
Montreal, Quebec H2X 3M4
(418) 920-3105

ERLISE COMMUNAIRE
DE MONTREAL ST-JEAN-BAPTISTE
CP 300, 300 Ste-Jean-Baptiste
Montreal, Quebec H2A 1Y9

Ottawa

GAYS OTTAWA
Box 2919, Station O
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5N9
(613) 238-1717

WOMEN'S CENTRE

136 Lewis Street (rear)
Ottawa, Ontario
(613) 233-2560

Kingston

QUEENS UNIVERSITY HOMOPHILE ASSOC
c/o Terry Watson
Student Affairs Centre
Queens University
Kingston, Ontario
(613) 347-4336 [9-9 pm, Mon-Thurs]

Toronto

YORK UNIVERSITY HOMOPHILE ASSOC
c/o Gai Lovio-Goyette
York University
4700 Keele Street
Downsview, Ontario M3J 1P3
CANADIAN GAY LIBERATION
MOVEMENT ARCHIVES
PO Box 2789, Station A
Toronto, Ontario M5H 1Y9

ANIK

Box 841, Station K
Toronto, Ontario M4p 2A2
GAY ALLIANCE TOWARD EQUALITY
194 Carlton Street
Toronto, Ontario M5A 4K7
(416) 981-9389

WOMEN'S PLACE & LESBIAN COLLECTIVE
137 George Street
Toronto, Ontario M5S 2H6
(416) 920-3105

COMMUNITY HOMOPHILE ASSOCIATION
OF TORONTO
223 Church Street (3rd floor)
Toronto, Ontario M5B 1Z1
(416) 862-1544

GAY SOCIAL CENTRE

207 Church Street
Toronto, Ontario M5B 1Y7
(416) 862-1169

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH

20 Trinity Square
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 364-9799

AMAZON WORKSHOP

12 Kensington Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M5T 2J7
(416) 862-0414 [10 am - 6 pm]

UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST GAY CAUCUS

c/o Elgin Blair
Box 6248, Station A
Toronto, Ontario M5H 1P6
THE BODY POLITIC
Box 7289, Station A
Toronto, Ontario M5H 1Y9
(416) 981-9389

Hamilton

HAMILTON/MCMMASTER GAY
LIBERATION MOVEMENT
Box 44, Station 6
Hamilton, Ontario L8L 7T5

Guelph

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
HOMOPHILE ASSOC.
University Centre, Room 218
Guelph, Ontario
(519) 824-4120 x8575

Kitchener & Waterloo

WATERLOO LESBIAN MOVEMENT
Federation of Students
University of Waterloo
Waterloo, Ontario
(519) 885-1211 x2372

London

HOMOPHILE ASSOCIATION OF LONDON ONT.
Box 4441
London, Ontario N6A 1B1
(519) 679-4441

Windsor

GAY UNITY
Box 2, Sandwich Post Office
Windsor, Ontario
(403) 808-6348

Thunder Bay

LAKEHEAD GAY LIBERATION
Lakeland University Students Union
Thunder Bay, Ontario

Winnipeg

GAYS FOR EQUALITY
Box 27, UOUC
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba
(204) 474-0216

HAPPENINGS SOCIAL CLUB

242 Manitoba Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
(204) 526-2049

Regina

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA
HOMOPHILE ASSOC.
Students Union Building
University of Regina
Regina, Saskatchewan
(306) 525-3941

Saskatoon

SASKATOON GAY ACTION
ZOOTIC FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY
124-A 2nd Avenue North
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
(306) 653-0975

LESLIAN FEMINISTS

(306) 244-0081

Edmonton

GAY ALLIANCE TOWARD EQUALITY
8225 15th Street
Edmonton, Alberta
(403) 433-8150

LESLIAN FEMINIST COLLECTIVE

10130-118th Street
Edmonton, Alberta
(403) 408-6348

CLUB '70s

10242-106th Street
Edmonton, Alberta

Vancouver

GAY ALLIANCE TOWARD EQUALITY
Box 333, 333 Main Street
Vancouver, BC V6K 3G7
(604) 736-5319

GAY PEOPLE OF UBC

Box 9, Student Union Building
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, BC V6T 1A5
(604) 736-5319

GAY PEOPLE OF SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Box 82141
North Burnaby, BC V5C 5P2
IRAVIAN IMAGE
(a gay media collective)
752 East 7th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V6L 1B9
(604) 879-4977

LESLIAN DRUG-IN

Box 160, 160 St. James Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 3A7
(604) 684-0523

Want to be listed? Send information about your group to: The Body Politic, Box 7289, Ste. N, Toronto, Ontario M5H 1Y9. Be sure to notify us of any changes in information listed on the Community Page.

**Nonprofit cooperative social club*

news

Government may end ban on immigrants

At an October 15th meeting hastily arranged by the Immigration Department in the face of a public picket of its Ottawa headquarters, representatives of Gays Ottawa were told that Manpower and Immigration Minister Robert Andras personally favours the repeal of the sections of the Immigration Act which prohibit the entry of gay people into Canada.

Meeting with Ron Bayman, Charlie Hill, and Dennis Gilmour of Gays Ottawa, Immigration Department Acting Director-General T. B. Sheehan stated that Andras considers the offending sections of the Act 'medieval' and 'antiquated', as well as being inconsistent with the 1969 decriminalization of consensual homosexual acts.

Bayman agrees, pointing out that "Andras stands, it's illegal to let homosexuals into Canada, but once you're here, it's legal".

Sheehan indicated that Andras would recommend to the cabinet the deletion from the Immigration Act of all references to sexuality. The Immigration Act is currently under review by the cabinet and a

posed this official lie to public view.

A second purpose of the Gays Ottawa picket was to draw public attention to the fact that they had received no answer to a letter written to Andras a month before asking for a meeting with him or a deputy in order to discuss the kyper case and possible changes in the Immigration Act. Subsequent attempts to set up a meeting with immigration officials were also rebuffed.

The Department's attitude quickly changed, however, when it learned of the intention of Gays Ottawa to picket its headquarters. Apparently fearful of adverse publicity, department officials contacted Gays Ottawa two hours before the demonstration and arranged the meeting with Sheehan.

Despite the meeting, the demonstration went ahead as planned. A dozen members of Gays Ottawa picketed Immigration Department headquarters for an hour in protest of the anti-homosexual provisions of the Immigration Act and Kyper's deportation.

The picketers distributed an explanatory leaflet to people entering and leaving the building, and to passers by. They also carried signs reading "Immigration Department discriminates against gays!", "Repeal all anti-gay laws!", "Gays demand rights!", and "I am not an 'undesirable type!'".

'Undesirable type' is a reference to sections of the Immigration Act which classify as 'undesirable' prostitutes and pimps, as 'prohibited persons' for homosexuality. See *Immigrants*, page 6

FREE INSIDE!

Included in this issue is a copy of a special free edition of *The Body Politic* which was distributed in Toronto in late October and early November.

The special edition was published as a means of countering the Toronto Star's editorial attack on *The Body Politic*. The Star's editors, although they invited public comment on their opinions, refused to print response from *The Body Politic* Collective.

The special edition contains the Star editorial, the letter submitted by the Collective to the Star, a letter from Star editorial page editor Robert Duffy rejecting the Collective letter, and an analysis of the errors involved in the publication of the Star editorial and its refusal to print *The Body Politic*'s response.

VANCOUVER RAIDS

page 6
NEWSPAPER REFUSES AD

page 7

When hints of police raids appeared in the *Wasserman* column, GATE wrote to BC Attorney-General Alex Macdonald, protesting the refusal of the BC Liquor Board to license gay clubs. Harcourt's statement represents the first concession by a public official that police harassment of



Two women demonstrate in front of the Ottawa headquarters of the Ministry of Manpower & Immigration to protest discriminatory provisions of the Immigration Act.

Found guilty of bias, newspaper retaliates with smear campaign

Apparently in retaliation for an adverse ruling by the Ontario Press Council, the *Toronto Star* smeared gay people as child molesters in its lead editorial of October 19. The editorial also invited public comment on the Star's policy of refusing classified advertisements from gay people and organizations, throwing open its pages to expressions of public hatred.

On October 12, the Ontario Press Council announced its decision that the *Star* was guilty of discrimination in refusing to publish an advertisement for Glad Day Books of To-

FREE INSIDE!

this full page
MEDIA FAIRNESS COMMITTEE
PICKETERS HIT NEWSPAPER
ADVERTISERS DESERT
page 7

ronto, a bookshop which specializes in gay liberation materials.

The Council's written decision said "in this case, the Council feels there was discrimination in refusal to publish a simple advertisement for a book shop".

And two weeks earlier, on September 28, the *Varsity*, the University of Toronto student newspaper, published a news item exposing the *Star*'s discriminatory policies towards gays.

A gay studies course offered by the university on the media in gen-

eral and the *Star* in particular for refusing to publicize the course. The article included as background information a history of the *Star*'s attempts to suppress the *Body Politic* and local gay organizations.

Apparently stung by these public criticisms, the *Star* published a lead editorial on October 19 entitled "Homosexuals: Where the *Star* Draws the Line". The editorial noted that there had been allegations that the *Star* discriminates against gays, citing the *Varsity* article and the Ontario Press Council decision.

The editorial claimed that "the *Star* supports full civil rights for homosexuals". But the rest of the editorial said that the rights of gay people should be limited because of the possibility of the spread of homosexuality, especially among children. This possibility was cited as the *Star*'s justification for refusing ads from gay, gay organizations and gay businesses.

Twice in the editorial, public

See *Smear campaign*, page 7

Quebec committee studies civil rights

A bill has been placed before the Quebec National Assembly which would create a human rights commission and, according to the minister responsible for the bill, it may be amended during the legislative process to include provisions protecting the rights of gay people.

Quebec Justice Minister Jerome Choquette, who introduced the charter of human rights in the Assembly, told a press conference on October 29 that the possibility of including specific protections for gays would be studied by the committee to which the bill is assigned.

Gay organizations in Quebec have established an informal coalition to make the most of the opportunity and are consulting regularly to coordinate strategy.

A brief proposing the inclusion of rights for gays in the new legislation is presently in preparation. In addition, letters of support are being sought from influential individuals and organizations. The brief and letters will be presented to the appropriate National Assembly committee.

The bill received unanimous approval on first reading October 29 and now goes to committee for detailed study.

Quebec remains the only jurisdiction in Canada without legislated civil and human rights.

Vancouver official reveals harassment

At a civic all-candidates meeting sponsored by the Vancouver Gay Alliance Toward Equality on November 17, Vancouver Alderman Mike Harcourt acknowledged that police raids had been carried out on several of Vancouver's gay clubs. Harcourt characterized the raids as "outrageous, unnecessary and vicious" and noted that the police had gone beyond their ostensible purpose of carrying out inspections.

Harcourt's acknowledgment came after official denials by the Vancouver police department that any harassment had occurred. GATE had protested to the police department when reports of harassment appeared in Vancouver Sun writer Jack Wasserman's column of November 5.

The police department denied in a telephone conversation with GATE Chairperson Maurice Flood that police harassment had occurred.

When hints of police raids appeared in the *Wasserman* column, GATE wrote to BC Attorney-General Alex Macdonald, protesting the refusal of the BC Liquor Board to license gay clubs.

Harcourt's statement represents the first concession by a public official that police harassment of

GATE also held a demonstration in front of police headquarters in Vancouver on November 23.

Coverage of Harcourt's comments was good with both Vancouver's dailies, *The Sun* and *The Province*, carrying articles on the all-candidates meeting.

SUITABLE FOR FRAMING

Prisoners were reluctant to discuss homosexuality, but admitted it "did not go on, if they caught you, they gave you fourteen days in the hole. Now, if they catch you, it's only ten days in The Hole. I guess it can't be so bad anymore."

From *The Toronto Globe & Mail*.

news

Manitoba gays demand change

Gays For Equality, a Winnipeg civil rights organization, has urged the Manitoba government to amend the Human Rights Act so as to protect gay people against discrimination.

In a brief presented to Attorney-General Howard Pawley on September 27, the group observed that gays constitute a large minority in Winnipeg, but that at present they are subject to discrimination in housing and employment without any channels of redress.

In addition to asking for the extension of human rights legislation to include "sexual orientation", the brief urged the establishment of research and education programmes to alleviate existing discriminatory practices.

Former Manitoba Attorney-General M. Mackling is condemned by name in the brief for denying a charter to a Winnipeg cooperative social club. Mackling stated publicly at that time: "Such groups ought not to be clothed with the same rights and respectability as other groups."

The brief was presented at a meeting between Pawley and Gays For Equality representatives Sue White, Marie Byner, and Chris Vogel. Also present was Acting Human Rights Director H. Klotz.

Pawley responded by saying that the Manitoba legislature would not accept the proposals made in the brief because the public is not ready to consider such matters.

In making this statement, Pawley apparently chose to ignore a relevant point made in the brief, which observed: "Rights are not subject to mass prejudice... It is fully consistent with the principle that all members of the human family are equal in inherent dignity and of human rights... (the Human Rights Act) must be expanded to include... sexual orientation."

Andras reaffirms support for immigration law change

In a letter to Gays Ottawa dated October 25, Minister of Immigration Minister Robert Andras has expressed his personal support for changes in the Immigration Act which would remove provisions discriminating against gay people.

Andras wrote: "I agree with you that the prohibition against homosexuals should be removed from Canadian immigration law."

But Andras cautioned the group that his personal views are not government policy and that immigration and population policy is currently under review.

He added that the review "does not mean that it is impossible for me to seek changes in immigration law in the advance of the discussions... There are several parts of the Immigration Act which are out of date and I hope to be able to introduce changes to some of them in the near future."

Gays Ottawa spokesperson Ron Dayman, commenting on the letter, said: "Mr. Andras' public expression of support is a victory for the gay movement in Canada, but we must keep in mind that real change can only come as a result of change in government policy."

...immigrants

personnel: the present act was last revised in 1952.

The 1986 White Paper on Immigration recommended the dropping of gay people from the class of inadmissible persons, but no legislative action was forthcoming on the recommendation.

Referring to the delay in response to the 1986 document, Denis LeBlanc, Gays Ottawa Political Action Committee Chairperson said: "Gays refuse to be ignored any longer. We demand an immediate end to the discrimination against gay people in immigration matters."

Justice denied: assailant acquitted, victim convicted

The final act in a ten-month long judicial farce came on November 1, when a Toronto police officer accused of common assault against a woman in his custody was acquitted. The woman and four of her friends were found in contempt of court.

The story began last January when four women were illegally detained by police after being evicted from The Brunswick House, a Toronto pub, for singing a lesbian song. The women later became known as the Brunswick Four.

According to the women, police took them to the garage of a police station, insulted and beat them, and then later arrested them when they returned to The Brunswick House to protest their eviction to the manager.

Their trial was remanded several times at the request of the Crown Attorney. Such delays are often requested by the Crown in cases where

police misconduct is alleged. The practice has the effect of harassing the citizens involved and letting any public outcry die down.

The case eventually came to trial at the end of May, with former Liberal cabinet minister Judy LaMarsh acting as the women's counsel.

The outcome of the trial was the dismissal of all charges except one. One of the Brunswick Four, Adrienne Potts, was found guilty of creating a public disturbance.

Potts then laid charges of common assault against Constable Robert He. Again, there were remands requested by the Crown. Finally, the case went to court November 1.

Judge S. Gordon Tinker found Potts not guilty because, according to the magistrate, there was a reasonable doubt which had to be resolved in the defendant's favour.

In the parallel trial of the Brunswick Four, however, a similar reas-

enable doubt did not prevent the conviction of Potts.

Potts, accompanied by several friends, attended the trial of the constable. They felt that the Crown Attorney deliberately shadowed the case in order to ensure Bill's acquittal.

The women tried to raise their objections to the manner in which the prosecution was being conducted several times in the course of the trial, but each time were silenced by the judge.

Finally, when Tinker adjourned the trial for lunch, the women refused to rise as the judge left the courtroom. When he called the trial to order later in the day, Tinker found Potts and four of her friends in contempt of court and sentenced each to a \$25 fine or three days in jail.

One of the women, Pat Murphy, who was among the original Brunswick Four, chose to go to jail rather than pay the fine.

Vancouver raids provoke protest

Thirty-five men and women showed their displeasure with recent police harassment of Vancouver's gay clubs by picketing police headquarters on Main Street November 23. The picket was organized by the Gay Alliance Toward Equality (GATE).

The harassment came to public attention when the Vancouver press carried a statement by Alderman Mike Hancock denouncing recent police raids on the clubs as "unnecessary and vicious". He said the police had gone beyond the bounds of simple in-

spection.

GATE has demanded a meeting with Vancouver police chief D. Wimberton to discuss the raids and prevent their recurrence.

Organizers of the picket were pleased at the turn-out in the face of cold and rain. In its coverage of the Hancock statement, the Vancouver press had publicized GATE's plans for a demonstration.

GATE Chairperson Maurice Flood described the picket as "an unequivocal success".

Student group strikes back at Guelph campus bigotry

Students at the University of Guelph are attempting to have the editor of a dormitory newsletter brought before an official tribunal because of recurrent, vicious anti-homosexual material which has appeared in the publication.

The first issue of The Bastphque, printed and circulated in an all-male residence, appeared in September.

The issue contained a phony ad for the University of Guelph Homophile Association (UGHA) which began: "A new throwing and crocheting club will be starting this week, all new members welcome..." and continued in this vein for about ten lines. The issue also contained crude sexual slurs and put-downs of women.

Representatives of UGHA and of other campus minority and women's organizations met with Mark Shoguen, editor of The Bastphque, on September 27. The meeting was arranged by the university's student government.

The offended group denounced the publication as "hate literature" and demanded an apology from Shoguen. Shoguen published a public apology on October 1 in The Ontario, the campus newspaper.

The apology read in part: "I wish to apologize to the following group... I would like to add that material of this sort will not be published again... I feel that we were wrong in printing the material that we did."

This did not end the matter, however, for the next issue of The Bastphque carried a retraction of the apology. Shoguen wrote: "The only people I wish to apologize to are the UGHA and that is not for anything I printed but for using their name in vain."

Shoguen added that the only reason he had apologized in the first place was that it was the only possible action over the material. As a result, he said, "I wrote a fast, keeping-happy apology."

The groups concerned, including UGHA, have now taken the matter to

the student government.

In a letter to Education Vice-President Bruce MacMillan the UGHA stated that the stereotypes being circulated in The Bastphque are "especially destructive to the self-confidence of less-informed gay

see campus bigotry, page 9

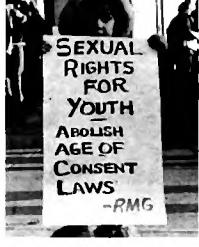
Rights supporter wins 6000 votes

A candidate who ran on a platform which included civil and human rights for gay people polled 6,000 votes in the October 25th Winnipeg mayoralty contest.

Brenda Dineen, running under the League for Socialist Action (LSA) banner, ran on a platform to elect Mayor Juba. Juba won easy reelection with over 100,000 votes.

Brenda Dineen

LSA organizers were pleased with Dineen's second-place showing, noting that "We have reached thousands of Winnipeg working people, women, natives, gay people, and students with our socialist program."



National coalition will promote civil rights fight

Consultations among gay organizations across Canada are now underway with the formation of a National Gay Rights Coalition (NGRC) in view, according to Ron Dayman, Chairperson of the Political Action Committee of Gays Ottawa (GO).

NGRC will replace the election-oriented National Gay Election Coalition, which confronted candidates with gay issues in the last two federal elections and ensure that the struggle for gay rights at the federal level of government is an ongoing affair.

The GO Political Action Committee is serving as National Coordinating Office for the formation of NGRC.

The Office has opened debate on the statement of principles, structure, and Programme of NGRC. These matters will be decided in a democratic manner, as prescribed in the resolution passed at the National Conference in Winnipeg earlier this year which initiated NGRC.

The initiating resolution was introduced by Toronto's Gay Alliance Toward Equality.

Voting on proposals for NGRC will take place in January.

news

Media Fairness Committee challenges Star slanders

Two demonstrations, one in front of the North York home of the president and publisher Beland Hondrich, were staged during the second week of November by the Committee for Media Fairness to Gays.

The Committee was formed October 30 to combat the anti-homosexual smear campaign kicked off by the Toronto Star in its lead editorial of October 19.

The Committee consists of two dozen people from the Body Politic Collective, the Gay Alliance Toward Equality, Young Socialists, the League for Socialist Action, the Revolutionary Marxist Group, and unfiliated individuals.

About 40 picketers marched in front of the Star building on November 8, distributing copies of the Body Politic special edition to Star employees and to passers-by. The special edition was also distributed in a cafeteria inside the building just before the demonstration began.

On November 10, about 20 people showed up in front of Hondrich's North York home. Hondrich is believed to be personally responsible for the Star's recurrent anti-homosexual hate binges.

Hondrich was not at home, but the demonstration succeeded nevertheless in attracting considerable attention. Horrified suburbanites whistled their little cars indoors and three police cruisers arrived to serve and monitor the peaceful picketers.

Hondrich's immediate neighbors, however, ventured from their home to talk to the demonstrators and expressed their support for the picketers.

After one hour the picketers dispersed, having planted placards on Hondrich's lawn which read "Beland is a bigot!" and "Hondrich is sick, not us!"

The Committee for Media Fairness to Gays also distributed to prominent persons and organizations a statement condemning the Star's policies. Endorsements were being sought, but few have so far been forthcoming.

In addition, the Committee distributed the special edition of the Body Politic in Toronto's gay ghetto, local campuses, and to selected neighborhoods of the city on a door-to-door basis.

According to Ken Popert, a member of the Body Politic Collective and an executive officer of the Committee, a public forum had been discussed, but the idea was dropped for lack of sponsors and financial support.

port.

The purpose of the forum would have been to invite Hondrich or a representative to give a public explanation of the Star's discriminatory policies.

Gay studies survive obstacles, others appear

A gay studies course offered by the University of Toronto has overcome obstacles placed in its path and is going ahead as planned.

The course "New Perspectives on the Gay Experience" is being offered by the university's School of Continuing Studies, which offers courses to the public. Such courses need publicity to attract students and meet enrolment criteria for continuation.

The Toronto press, however, ignored university press releases about the gay studies course. The Toronto Star supported a feature story on the course written by one of its reporters.

However, Professor Michael Lynch, who is teaching the course, reports that "the course has been fully enrolled despite a reluctance on the part of the media to publicize it."

The course has been hearing guest speakers discuss recent views favorable to gay people in various disciplines. Speakers have included sociologist John J. Gagnier, author of "Colours of Love," Professor Phyllis Kreeger, author of a biography of John Addington Symonds, psychoanalyst Dr. Dariusz F. Furdyna, and Catholic theologian Father Gregory Ryan.

Gay studies courses are being offered at two other educational institutions in Canada. "The Other Face of Love—Studies in Gay Male Literature" is being taught at Concordia University in Montreal by Professor Robin Martin and Will Atkinson of Montreal's Androgyne Bookshop.

And at Champlain College in St. Lambert, Quebec, Professor Bryan Doubt will be teaching a course "The Homosexual Perspective in Literature" beginning this January.

Also in January, the University of Toronto School of Continuing Studies will offer a course in North American literature.

Advertisers desert The Body Politic

Following The Toronto Star's attack upon the Body Politic, which many felt was a transparent attempt to isolate the gay liberation movement from gay people, several self-styled "businessmen" have withdrawn their advertising from The Body Politic and will no longer sell the paper in their establishments.

Leading the rush to punish The Body Politic for upsetting his fellow businessmen at the Toronto Star was Peter Maloney, owner of the local branch of the foreign-owned Clob Bath chain and owner of The Barracks, another Toronto steamship.

The Roman Shamus and The Library Steamship followed Mr. Maloney's lead. The owner of the former establishment said that he was taking the action as the result of a letter from one R Lee which has been circulated to all Body Politic advertisers, suggesting they terminate their business with the paper.

Taylor said that the letter cited a Metropolitan Community Church newsletter editorial, written by Ro-

bert Wolff, minister of the Toronto congregation.

The manager of The Library Steamship said: "Gay business and the gay church are gonna get together on this."

Commenting on the situation, Gerald Hannon, Body Politic advertising manager said: "Ads from these establishments were becoming a nuisance both within the Collective and among our readers; now the problem is solved and the loss in revenue has more than been made up for by advertisers."

Gays Ottawa elect officers

Gays Ottawa has named Charlie Hill to the office of president for a third term at its annual membership meeting in November. Hill was unopposed in seeking reelection.

Also elected to executive office were Glenn Fredericks, Charles Bellavance, and Denis LeBlanc.



Picketers at the home of Star president & publisher Beland Hondrich momentarily turn their backs on the object of their disaffection.

Picketers hit newspaper slanders

About 35 men and women marched in front of the offices of The Toronto Sun on October 26 to show their anger over a Sun editorial which slandered gay people.

The demonstration was arranged by the Gay Alliance Toward Equality (GATE) and was aimed at the Sun's editorial of October 21, which described gays as "unnatural and abnormal" and "an aberration."

The Sun editorial was provoked by a Toronto Star editorial which pictured gay people as child-molesters and invited public comment on this opinion.

Two Sun reporters emerged from the building and asked Terrence Phillips, GATE Information Officer, and John Watson, GATE President Officer, inside to discuss the matter. A

small article later appeared in the Sun reporting that Toronto's "homosexual community is not happy with The Sun."

The tanks of the demonstrators were temporarily swelled by the arrival of some members of the Revolutionary Marxist Group, which was holding a conference in a nearby building.

...smear campaign

comment was invited. This was interpreted by the gay community as inviting a public outpouring of hatred against gays.

Within 36 hours of the publication of the Star editorial, The Toronto Sun hit the streets with an editorial piece of hate-literature which characterized gays as "unnatural and abnormal" and "an aberration." These remarks were prefaced with a statement that they were offered in response to the Star's request for public reaction.

The reader response which The Star allowed to appear in its letters section was overwhelmingly hostile to gay people. Favourable letters were few and hidden under misleading headlines. Further, not a single response from any gay community group was permitted to appear.

Activists were quick to point out that both the editorial and the responses to it were printed on three successive Saturdays, with no allusion to the matter in the week-day issues. The circulation of The Star on Saturdays is about 40% higher than during the week.

It was also noted that The Star was apparently engaged in a deliberate and well-planned campaign to incite hatred against gay people.

The Star's editorial, the appearance of its editorial attack, and the Star's published a story about an Ottawa demonstration protesting the anti-homosexual provisions of the Immigration Act.

Since The Star has always excluded coverage of gay political activity from its pages, some activists concluded that the story was allowed to appear in order to create public awareness of the issue. The headline on the Star article said that Manpower & Immigration Andras Favours letting Homosexuals into Country.

Also, on October 18, the day before the editorial blast, a Star photographer had to be physically ejected from a private marriage ceremony uniting two women, one with a child.

It has been suggested that The Star, uninvited, had planned sensational coverage of the marriage and the fact that one of the women was a mother in order to play up the issue of homosexual procreation. The Star's editorial prior to the publication of its editorial.

Paper refuses ad, rights code invoked

The Vancouver Gay Alliance Toward Equality (GATE) has filed a complaint with the director of the British Columbia Human Rights Commission against The Vancouver Sun.

GATE submitted to The Sun a classified ad for Gay Tide. The ad was refused as "unacceptable" in a letter from C. J. Stone, Assistant Manager of the Classified Advertising Department.

GATE pressed The Sun for clarification and received from Marketing Director J. Torgood a letter stating that he had "nothing further to add to the Sun's position."

Justice Ruff, Director of the Human Rights Commission, announced on November 18 that she would meet with GATE spokespersons to discuss the complaint.

GATE Chairperson Maurice Flood was interviewed on the "Good Morning Radio" show on November 20.

The hosts of the program tried to contact Torgood, but he made him self unavailable for comment. They were able, however, to contact Ruff. Ms. Ruff indicated that she would meet later in the month with the publisher of The Sun to discuss the complaint.

The outcome of GATE's complaint will establish whether BC's new long-awaited Human Rights Act protects gays against discrimination in services and facilities normally available to the public.

Vancouver's daily papers, The Province and The Sun both reported the lodging of GATE's complaint. Coverage on the "Good Morning Radio" program was sympathetic; the host summarized the programme with the words: "So, the issue is, do we have freedom of the press in BC?"

news



Children risk seduction

Apparently ignoring the warnings of Toronto's "family newspaper", the Star and the Sun, the three children pictured above courageously risked being homosexually raped when they joined in a gay picket of the Sun recently.

Their unexpected arrival nearly caused a riot as many of the gays, unable to restrain themselves in the face of such provocation, broke

rank and attempted to unnaturally proselytize to the youngsters.

One demonstrator was so overcome with lust for the children that he began drooling on the sidewalk and had to be dragged away, kicking and screaming.

A spokesperson for the gays later assured reporters that, despite such incidents, none of the children had been molested.

Gay bursary established

Funds have been received by the Loyola campus of Concordia University in Montreal to finance a \$200 bursary which is to be awarded annually to a gay student. It is believed to be the first scholarship restricted to members of the gay minority ever offered by a university. The bursary has been established by an anonymous donor in memory of a relative and is to be awarded to a gay student, male or female, who shows academic merit and financial need.

Concordia is a new undergraduate university formed by the merging of Sir George Williams University and Loyola College. Although Loyola College was affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church, Concordia is a public institution. There are about 4500 students on the Loyola campus.

The bursary has received only tentative approval from the Loyola Scholarship Committee pending the establishment of a policy on restricted scholarships by the new university.

Puerto Rico gays suffer set-back

Puerto Rico's gay community is bracing itself for a showdown with the government in January, when a new penal code containing stricter anti-gay clauses comes into effect.

Originally, a judicial reform committee recommended that anti-gay sections be amended to prohibit only sex by force or threat, or with someone 16 years of age or younger. However, public outcry against this proposal resulted in the sections remaining unaltered and new sections prohibiting sex between women, and the operation of gay bars have been added to the new legislation.

When the legislature passed the Bill, militant gay groups launched a campaign asking the Governor not to sign the Bill into law.

However, the Governor refused to go against public opinion, and would not veto the legislation. The result of all this has been to force the previously underground gay movement to surface and organise for its rights.

The new penal code takes effect on January 22nd.

Union wins 'partial victory'

The efforts of Toronto Public Library employees to have a written guarantee prohibiting discrimination on the basis of "sexual preference" included in their first union contract has met with partial success. Although the guarantee was not included in the contract itself, library management agreed to embody this assurance in a "Letter of Intent" to be appended to the contract.

Chris Fox, president of the negotiating committee for Canadian Union of Public Employees local 1582, which represents Toronto library employees, indicates that the union will try to have the protective measure included in the body of the contract when it comes up for renegotiation in 1976.

London group makes plans for new centre

The Homophile Association of London Ontario has rented a building which, when ready for use, will be Canada's largest gay community centre.

The building, located on Colborne Street in London, is a two-storey structure with over 10,000 square feet of usable floor space.

The main floor will be used by the Association for dances and other functions, while the basement and part of the second floor will be used for offices.

"We feel really happy, eager, and hopeful about this place," says the Association executive.

Vancouver groups seek city council funding

The Vancouver Gay Information Service, in an unprecedented move, appeared before Vancouver City Council on September 26th seeking a grant of \$25,000 to operate its services for the coming year.

The organisation also presented a brief to the Standing Committee on Social Services outlining the need for the grant by stating that, until now, it had "financed services from personal funds which are now depleted."

The brief stated that Vancouver Gay Information Service, in addition to operating (Have A Gay Stay (a transient housing service) maintaining a 24-hour crisis centre, providing a drug counselling programme and other services, would also conduct research into discrimination in Vancouver and compile a report on its findings.

David Lewis, co-ordinator for the Service, stated that "Council has

been very up-front about their position. They have claimed that to give a grant to a gay organisation would be 'political dynamite'. However, it was further stated that all grants are 'political', and that our request would be given serious consideration."

This was the position outlined by Alderman Harry Rankin, chairman of the committee, who suggested that the application be forwarded to the city's social planning department for a detailed assessment of the group's need for funding.

Barren Hague, another spokesperson for the organisation, has argued that the request should be judged "on merit rather than on political persuasions."

The Gay Information Service will appear in Council Chambers again in a few weeks, after the social planning department has made its report.

Australian commission recommends reforms

The West Australia government's royal commission on homosexuality has recently issued a report that recommends a liberalisation of the state's laws concerning homosexuality.

The commission recommended, among other things, that homosexual acts in private between consenting adults over the age of 18 should not be a criminal offence.

The commission made its recommendations after receiving more than 50 written submissions and holding 12 public meetings.

Among the commission's other suggestions were a revision of the statutes relating to sex in public places and to non-consensual acts by removing severe punishments such as hard labour and whipping.

The report also urged "greater tolerance by the heterosexual community" towards homosexuals and acknowledged that most problems for gay people arise as a result of social pressures forced upon them by heterosexuals.

The commission also received evidence of discrimination, assault, and blackmail against homosexuals.

The report has received support from the press and church groups and will be debated in the West Australian Parliament shortly.

However, Brian Lindberg, president of the Campaign Against Moral Persecution (CAMP), stated: "This is all a big step in the right direction, but not quite far enough."

CAMP in particular objects to the establishment of 18 as the age of consent when the age for heterosexuals is 16.

...campus bigotry

within residences who are struggling to find their own personal identities.

The University Judicial Committee or a Hearing Board of the University Policy Committee on Human Rights could examine the matter. Either body could recommend expulsion or a lesser penalty for Shoplan.

The Body Politic refuses ad for Toronto bar

Beginning in this issue, the Body Politic will not carry advertisements for the Carriage House, a popular gay hotel and bar in Toronto, because it discriminates against women.

The Carriage House has recently changed its regulations and now refuses to allow women into the two lower floor bars and will only admit women into the upstairs lounge if they are properly attired.

Proper attire, according to the management of the hotel, means that women will not be allowed to wear blue-jeans.

Previous to this change, women had been allowed into all of the hotel's bars.

When asked about the new policy, a Mr. Greene, manager of the bars, informed the Body Politic that women were being restricted from the lower bars because these were now licensed with the Liquor Licensing Control Board as "men's bars".

However, he did not say why they were reclassified.

He also stated that he was banning women in bluejeans and men in T-shirts from entering the upstairs lounge because he wanted to "dress it up".

Asserting that it was his legal right to do this, he went on to state that the 16 were "harassed" for these decisions, he would insist that female patrons wear dresses.

In view of Mr. Greene's statements,

the Body Politic Collective concludes that the Carriage House has deliberately adopted a policy intended to discriminate against women and we will not, therefore, accept the hotel's advertisements until this policy has changed.

Socialist candidates lend support to gay civil rights

The League for Socialist Action (LSA) has recently taken a more public stance on homosexuality by extending its support to the gay rights struggle.

LSA candidates in Toronto's recently completed municipal elections furthered this support by explicitly referring to discrimination against gays in their campaign literature.

This support was outlined in a section of their platform entitled "Civil and Human Rights for Gays".

The section demanded the repeal of Criminal Code provisions dealing with homosexual acts, an end to discrimination in employment, housing, and immigration, and an end to police harassment.

comment

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a more militant movement

September 30, 1974: An Indian march on Parliament Hill by several hundred, resulting in the calling out of the riot squad.

October 15, 1974: Twelve gay men and women picket the immigration department.

Two very different protests occurring within a few weeks of one another in the national capital, both of which I experienced.

Yet the parallels are evident. Two minority groups publicly demanding their rights and an end to oppressive government policies.

Both movements have until recently relied almost exclusively on quiet negotiations and dealings with civil servants and politicians, a tactic which resulted in their rights being ignored by the government and the public at large.

The more conservative elements of the Indian movement immediately condemned the new militancy of the Native People's Caravan. However, after the dust of the violent and brutal assaults of the RCMP on the protestors had settled, it became evident that their mass march on Parliament Hill had finally forced the government to take the demands of the Native People seriously. Cabinet level meetings were immediately arranged with Indian leaders.

On a smaller level, the situation was similar in the case of the gay picket. Presentations and lobbying to seek changes in the Immigration Act had taken place for over a year. Gays of Ottawa had been attempting to obtain a meeting with immigration officials for over a month concerning the Kyper case. The Immigration Department continued to ignore us, not even responding to a Gays of Ottawa letter. Then suddenly under the threat of public action, the immigration department contacted us to offer a meeting with senior officials. The resulting meeting and picket received wide media coverage, a necessary educational tool for raising both the straight and gay collective consciousnesses.

Many within the Gay movement, as within the Indian movement, have condemned and continue to condemn public action as a tactic. They claim it 'harms our image' or is 'ineffective', particularly when there are so few who are willing or able to march. This became one of the major issues of the National Conference in Winnipeg when a group of individuals chose not to participate in the National Gay Pride March for these very reasons.

The results disprove their contention. Twelve gay men and women in Ottawa managed to obtain real concrete results, results which under the table dealings would never have accomplished, i.e. publicity for the gay rights cause, and public statements on behalf of a federal minister. And this is not the first such example. GATE Vancouver, GATE Toronto, and Gays for Equality (Winnipeg) have shown in the past that public action by a small group of gay people is very effective.

This is not to deny the need for dialogue. But when politicians and the media are unresponsive, the dialogue becomes one-sided. Was this not largely the case in the NGEF effort where the press and the majority of the candidates ignored the questionnaire campaign? It was only the participation in public meetings which forced the politicians to commit themselves publicly and the media to report our demands.

The Gay Liberation Movement in this country must once and for all realize that it is only through public action that Gay Rights will be taken seriously. We cannot remain a closet movement forever if we are truly interested in equality for gay people.

Ron Dayman

comment

MCC - liberation faith

The essential teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, known as the Christ, is a message of liberation, of freedom. Of that there can be no doubt, if we carefully read the statements attributed to him in the gospels, and if we carefully read the writings of the period immediately following his death. There can be no doubt, regardless of what churches and 'conventional christian wisdom' have done with those teachings.

Since that message is one of liberation, the gospel of Jesus Christ is timely and vital to a depressed and downtrodden community of gay people today, just as it was timely and vital to the depressed and downtrodden community of Jews, and others, in the first century.

Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto, along with its seventy-five affiliated churches in eight countries, is a christian church. It is a christian church in that it follows Christ. Its loyalty is to him, not to man-made ecclesiastical organisations. It listens to what he had to say. It accepts him as model, leader, teacher. When he says that he is the son of God, we know that he is telling us that we can each have that same relationship with the creator, with the source of all life, with the prime mover. When he fought the Pharisees, when he said that the whole of the old testament-- church law-- added up to saying "love God and love your neighbour", we know he was saying that humans had taken the truth of God and tried to smash it down into a man-written book of rules. Today we look at what churches have done in the past nineteen centuries, and we know that the Pharisees are still at work, and have been trying to take the life affirming teachings of Jesus and smash them down between the covers of another man-written book of rules.

That message is one of spirit, not of rules: stop living your life in fear of what others are saying. Make

up your own mind. Are you going to live a life of solitude just for your own pleasure and creature comfort, or are you going to live to be a part of a community of free people in touch with the source and the continuity of all existence? Make up your own mind-- are you going to be alone, or are you going to be a part of the One?

A big part of the oppression of gays is gay oppression, what we do to ourselves as gay people. We hear it from childhood: gay is bad, gay is ridiculous, gay is immoral and sinful, gay is despicable. Each of us has had to face the day when she or he had to admit to being one of those bad, ridiculous, immoral, sinful, despicable persons, and we each had to make some sort of adjustment to that discovery, some sort of peace within ourselves. But all too often, the Pharisaical poison remains planted deep inside of us. We have bought the judgments of others, we have no faith, we make the traditions of man our god, rather than the spirit that is within. We hide within ourselves or cluster in small congenial ghettos like strangers in an alien and hostile land.

A church which believes Jesus when he tells us that each of us is to look to God as father, not to humans; that each of us has within us the spirit of God which tells us what is right and what is wrong in our lives, if we'll only listen; that faith in God requires faith in self-- that church has got to be immersed in gay liberation, and human liberation, as much as any other group, perhaps even more so.

Whatever the label we use: God, Source of Life, Great Parent, Universal Principle, the message is the same. Relate to it and be a part of it; have faith, you're not alone; break out of the negative thought patterns you've inherited from parents, teachers, churches; affirm life and community of love in a positive, confident way.

That's Christ's message, and that's gay liberation. They are one and the same.

Robert Wolfe pastor

Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto.

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inside out

Gay oppression is ubiquitous, multi-sided and often difficult to describe. And yet, if we don't know how and why we are oppressed, there's not much point in talking about "liberation".

Inside Out is a column of basic observations which are essential to self-understanding -- and therefore self-liberation.

Many gay people have to face the accusations of friends and relatives that their sexual orientation is against the will of God. We feel that this extract from the book *What Every Homosexual Knows* will be helpful in dealing with this common situation.

Let us take an indisputably "clear" statement against homosexuality: "Do not lie with a male as one lies with a woman; it is an abhorrence." (Leviticus 18:22). No one should attempt to obscure the fact that there is a "clear" Biblical injunction against homosexual behavior. Equally "clear" are the following statements:

- 1) If a man commits adultery with a married woman, the adulterer and adulteress shall be put to death. (Leviticus 20:10).
- 2) When brothers dwell together and one of them dies and leaves no son, the wife of the deceased shall not be married to a stranger outside the family. The husband's brother shall unite with her and take her as a wife. (Deuteronomy 25:5).

The important and crucial point is why do we reject the above "clear" Old Testament statements when it refers to heterosexual relationships, but accept the "clear" statement against homosexuality. What are the methods which enable a person to say that certain laws of God are obsolete while other laws of God are operative?

Let us continue with our discussion of the "clear" laws of the Bible. Do you possess property? Read what Jesus said to the man who asked to gain eternal life, the objective of most Christians. "One thing thou lackest. Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give it to the poor." Do you turn the other cheek when someone nauts you? Do you give your clothing to a person who merely asks for it? These statements of Christ are commands, and to a Christian, one could presume, more binding than any statement in either the Old or New Testaments.

Some Christians find reasons to disobey these direct and clear commands, and yet do not feel mentally ill-at-ease in demanding that the community support the prohibition of homosexual behaviour. Be honest. See if your acceptance of the clear statement against homosexuality is not based on a dislike of the act itself or of your impression of certain homosexuals. You do not like homosexuality, so naturally you demand obedience of this particular Old Testament law -- at the same time, of course, personally ignoring or disobeying other Old Testament laws. In other words, you obey just the laws of God that suit you.

Is it not time we honestly admit that saying that the Bible condemns certain sexual practices is merely another way of saying that certain individuals condemn these practices. As I have shown, the Bible is "clear" about adultery, but we do not put adulterers to death. The Bible is "clear" in the command to a brother to marry his brother's wife if his brother has died and left no son. None of us obey these laws. According to Roman Catholics, the Bible is "clear" when it says, "Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another committeth adultery against her." Are you divorced? Do you approve of divorce? You are, according to one interpretation, disobeying God's law. Do we kill divorced persons even if Christ said that a divorced person commits adultery and you recall the Old Testament commands the killing of adulterers. *Why do we not obey these sex laws governing the relationship of man and woman?* The answer is clear to me. When it suits our Purpose, we change, modify, and reinterpret the law.

To hide behind the facade that the restrictions on homosexuality are God's will, however, is intellectual dishonesty, unless the person, himself, imposes on himself all of the prohibitions and laws of both the Old and New Testaments -- and no person in our society does this.

THE LESBIAN AND GOD-THE-FATHER

Sally Gearhart

or

Of the host of things I'd like to share with you, a few at least bear mention:

I could speak with you about the twelve specific references to homosexuality in the Bible, about the fact that only one of those references includes any suggestion of female homosexuality.

Or, I might use a feature-article approach on "Lesbians I Have Known in the Church" (and still know). I doubt that many of you would be shocked at personal or experiential estimates of the number of lesbians in your congregations. I would, though, assure you that you don't find lesbians just among the single women in the church; nor, of course, are all single women lesbians. What may come as a bit of a surprise is that lesbians are to be found in significant numbers among heterosexually married women, women trapped by their commitment to families and to husbands, women who know deep in themselves that their most authentic love relationships have been and perhaps even now are with women.

Perhaps more important might be a recounting of the hundreds of lesbians I have met in the past year who have left the church. I could relate hair-raising stories of how the church attempted to dehumanize them, of how much pain they have suffered at its hands. I could tell you of the rage that erupts in some of them at the suggestion of anything Christian and of the tolerant laughter that springs from others at the mention of such devilized concepts as 'sin' or 'salvation'.

Or, I could fall into the old trap of trying to define a lesbian by male standards, by the same philosophy that says "All the lesbian needs is a good lay with a real man to make her normal." The male notion of the lesbian is the sexual one: she is a lesbian simply because she 'has sex' with women. Nothing could be farther from the truth. But if we were talking in man-language about lesbianism, I'd want to point out that what lesbians and gay men do in bed is *technically* no different from what many of you do in bed with your wives or husbands (assuming you have a healthy and vivid sexual relationship). The pain is that although heterosexual couples do 'it' and marriage manuals even recommend 'it' to buck up an otherwise tired and dull sexual life, still you give lip service to the notion that the 'missionary position' is the only proper mode of sexual expression. You support a hypocritical morality that sanctions only the sex act that is potentially progenerative. By your silence on any other mode of sexual expression you continue to oppress gay people every minute of every day.

But the main thing I want to share with you is twofold.

First, I cannot separate the lesbian from the woman. This is not only because my oppression has been more as a woman than as a lesbian (though that of course is true), but also because to me being a lesbian is what really being a woman means. I like to think that the way politically conscious lesbians 'are' in the world today is the way all women were before the tyranny of the patriarchy. To be a lesbian is to be identified not by men or by a society made by men, but by me, by a woman. And the more I am identified by/for me, by/for my own experience, by/for my own values, the more a full woman I feel I become.

More and more woman-identified women are emerging every day. More and more lesbians. It's not that more and more women are leaping into bed with each other. That may be your fantasy-- certainly it is a common male fantasy-- as to what lesbianism is all about. And indeed, my understanding is that astounding numbers of women are extending their love relationships with other women into sexual dimensions. But that's not the distinguishing characteristic of a lesbian. Lesbianism is a life-style, a mind-set, a body of experiences. I would like to call any woman-identified woman a lesbian, and if she's really woman-identified, she'll feel good about being called a lesbian, whether or not she's had any sexual relationship with another woman.

The woman-identified women who are being reborn every day are those who are shaking off the chains forged by thousands of years of ecclesiastical propaganda. Shaking off their definition as male property, as male's helpmate, as the pure and empedestated virtue-vessels that need chivalrous male protection. They are the unladylike women, the angry women, the ones who make you feel a little uneasy with their freedom of body, with the way they cross their legs or open their own car doors, or the way they look as though they'll give you a karate chop if you hassle them. They are the ones who reach a deep and threatening place inside every man's gut, the ones who can make your stomach turn over because they represent a truth that your own stomach has always secretly known. Particularly if you are a man, you both hate and admire their independence, their strength.

The women being reborn today (that's the real meaning of resurrection) are the ones marching for the rights to their own bodies at abortion demonstrations. Often they are women of witch-like appearance, women in jeans and boots who have laid away the girdles and garters that bound them into the profiteering system. They are women whose faces are honest, whose hair flies free, whose minds and bodies are growing supple and steady and sure in their self-possession, whose love is growing deep and wide in the realities of newly discovered relationships with other women.

They don't need the church. The last thing they think about now is the church. They have within themselves what the church has claimed as its own and distorted so ironically for its own economic and psychological purposes these thousands of years.

Second, being a lesbian involves for me some growing political consciousness. That means I am committed to assessing institutions like the church, which, as far as women are concerned, takes the prize as the most influential and in itself the most insidiously oppressive institution in Western society. The matter of its influence needs no elaborating. Its insidiousness lies most obviously in the fact that it has made women (particularly white women) not only victims but murderers in a complex and exploitative economic system. One of the greatest marks of women's oppression is our conviction that we are not oppressed.

I look forward with great anticipation to the death of the church as it presently exists. The sooner it dies, the sooner we can be about the business of living the gospel. That living cannot take place in the church as

it is now, and I suspect that most of us here have known that for a long time. But if we count on 'renewal' or 'reform', then clearly we have not heard the voices of Third World peoples here and abroad.

Renewal and reform are not enough. Renewal and reform are more often soft, liberal cop-outs and tokenism in the face of real and harder tasks. For example, with gritted teeth some denominations offer to ordain women.

all the church needs is a good lay (on its side)

They then expect me to rejoice in this, light bonfires on the hillside, and dance around the sacred flame. Far from rejoicing, I really feel sick, sick that woman energy shall now officially be made captive to the institutions, sick that in the very act of ordination a woman has separated herself from me and from others. She has played the church's game for good reason-- in order to secure her survival. But in doing so, she hasn't changed the church. She has only mounted another pedestal.

I am weary of the timid reassurances that "things are changing", or that "our congregation/pastor/district/seminary is different", or that you have to play the system's game to get into a power position so you can do some good. I mistrust with all my woman-heart the motive that keeps women committed to church renewal, i.e., "The church needs me." I am tired of hearing liberal churchpeople (both women and men) lay out transforming radical ideas in private and then collapse into seek submission in public when the chips are down. But I do understand why it happens: I know how important in this society it is to get a pay check.

I long to hear voices in public church gatherings in-

sisting not only upon the death of the institutional church but upon specific ways of carrying out that goal. In other words, I want to hear voices (so held in private) insisting in public upon programs that affirm plural relationship, collective and communal living, same-sex love relationships, childhood sexuality, masturbating, and self-love. I want loud voices protesting sex-role socialization; that is, our practice of brainwashing people with outside plumbing to assume the

role of strong-dominant-active-intelligent-conquering-IE--MAN, and those with inside plumbing to assume that of weak-submissive-receptive-dumb-conquered-GIRL. Of course if such voices are heard, they are not likely to be heard again very often under the rafters of the institutional church. Such speakers have to be prepared to be ousted-- and that, after all, may be the real point.

What is devastating and dehumanizing about the church is not its foundation of love, but the superstructure of patriarchal, theological claptrap that has been hoisted on that foundation. The superstructure shivers and quakes whenever the sanctity of the nuclear family or the traditional concepts of sexuality are called in question-- and well it might shake, for it is these two concepts that are the bricks and mortar of the church.

The structure of the church (God over man, man over woman, father over family, clergy over laity, power over powerlessness) is vertical, hierarchical. The church's very identity depends on that hierarchy. This identity is dependent upon standards of success and failure, on authority, on competition. It is dependent upon who has power over whom. The idea is that God is at the top with power over all, and I as women am at the bottom of the heap. Together with children my passivity is sanctified.

It will do no good to "renew" this church. If the gospel is to live, then the vertical structure will have to be laid on its side -- horizontalized -- and that, to me, means the death of the institutional church.

Women who are being reborn these days do not want a man to step down from the pulpit so that a woman can step into it. They would do away with the pulpit altogether -- do away with the physical setting apart of any person for purposes of "preaching" or "teaching."

Women of high consciousness do not want an equalization of the number of women and men on church councils. They would do away with councils themselves, with any body of people that is anything but voluntary and open to anyone concerned.

Women who are really getting it together don't want to be national presidents or bishops or pope. They don't want presidents, bishops, popes, and the like to exist at all, for the very definition of their office puts them above some and below others.

Women-identified women don't want the Bible rewritten to talk about God-the-lother or Jesus the Saviourress. The women I have in mind believe that each person creates herself out of her own experience and that we must all work out in community our salvation from the repressive system we've grown up with.

Women who think of a revolution don't want just to have "Ladies' Sunday" in the local congregation, where women run the show. They want to do away with the show altogether, because as it presently exists, it is just that: a performance and not a participation. They do not want traditional worship, because that calls for craning their necks to look up or for howling their

(continued on page 23)



Gerald Hannon

was christ a cocksucker?



Think of the depressing contrast between the radiant intelligence of a healthy child and the feeble intellectual powers of the average adult. Can we be quite certain that it is not precisely religious education which bears a large share of the blame for this relative atrophy?

Freud - The Future of an Illusion

It is my intention in this article to examine the relationship between the Christian religion and sexuality as it finds social expression in contemporary western cultures. I also address myself, in the latter part of this article, to those gay men who would call themselves Christian. Perhaps it would be best to state here that this can hardly pretend to be an exhaustive analysis, and that the frame of this article is more supported by the ardour of my convictions than by the extensive nature of my research. However, it bears the virtue of a tentative statement in that it will no doubt provoke the reader to a considered assessment of the arguments and facts herein, and in placing before the general readership a coherent, if not conclusive, analysis; I flatter myself in thinking that interest may be reawakened in an aspect of our oppression up to now generally neglected by the liberation media.

I should like to begin with a consideration of the Jesus people as the most vigorous example of the Christian delusion. Certainly, the historically anti-sexual bias of this creed is sufficiently well-known to obviate the need to detail it here. One need only recall the fulminations of Tertullian or Jerome, the "Concupiscence is vice... human flesh born through it is a sinful flesh" of Augustine, the insane attempts in the Middle Ages to restrict sexual expression to a minimum number of days, to feel that Christianity has never been given to Dionysian excess.

Today: the Jesus people, long-haired enough to be freaks but squeaky-clean and relentlessly saccharine, are one of the more depressing phenomena on the contemporary scene. On one level though they are somewhat engaging - quiet, open and rather generous; a little boring perhaps and both tireless and tiresome in their proselytizing but nonetheless fired by convictions which might suggest to the innocent observer a fecund mental life. For example, they are known to advocate communal living, and gay liberationists themselves have suggested just such a radical restructuring of the familial system. However, here the similarity ends, as anyone who has met them can attest. They are frequently encountered in pairs - a man and a woman - and true to the teachings of Paul, the woman remains a few decorous steps behind the more aggressive, articulate male, and restricts her ejaculations to an occasional 'hosannah!'. A short conversation will reveal that sex outside marriage is fornication and sinful; and homosexuality is without reser-

vation an abomination. Of course, the term 'conversation' suggests rational discourse, and it is charitable of me to describe our confrontations thus. Very little is said by a Jesus person that cannot be substantiated by recourse to the New Testament, and one discovers one is not talking to a person so much as to a product. They are indeed the word made flesh -- and little else.

An interesting article in *Psychology Today* (December, 1972) entitled "Jesus People: Sexism Revived" verifies through careful study the impressions gleaned by the more casual observer. In Christ Commune, one frequently hears the 'sisters' exchange comments such as "Isn't it a blessing to know your place!", and as the authors continue:

"...no woman at Christ Commune in 1972 is included in the farm's decision-making process...Women bow to the authority of all men in the group, especially their fiancés or husbands...Women's conversations seem to focus on knowing that 'place', instead of on such topics as men, dating and dress. It is assumed that sisters who were 'new' in the lord would experience many trials in their relationships with men. The group encourages these sisters to share their trials with 'older' sisters, or with pastors (all males)."

It is also significant that if a man is sexually aroused by a woman he is not contracted to, he is considered to have 'stumbled' -- or rather to have been stumbled by the woman in question, for the females are put in the position of having to accept that their bodies cause sin. The male's response is always 'natural' -- it is the woman's responsibility to see that a sexually charged situation does not occur. The groups' oppressive attitudes towards sexuality are also illustrated in their opinions of premarital sex: 86% favoured it before joining Christ Commune; only 5% approved after their conversion, and though their attitudes to homosexuality have not been recorded, it is not difficult to imagine what they are. One recalls the incident reported in the *Advocate* last year when a gay person was stabbed by a Jesus Freak who also splattered the walls with human excrement -- a rather graphic illustration of the connection made between filth and sexuality in Christian theory. We must remember here that we are dealing with a group that has generally been hailed as truly Christian, as a return to the spirit of the Gospels; and yet these people regard sexuality, outside the bonds of sanctified marriage, as "in itself a trap, fraught with ritual and personal danger."

The effect of religious conviction of a more traditional sort on the sexual life of the human male has been studied by Kinsey and his associates. He concludes:

"...devout acceptance of the Church's teachings is correlated with sexual frequencies which are two thirds or less than two thirds of the frequencies

which are found among males of corresponding age and educational levels who are not actively connected with the church."

Even after accepting the holy bonds of matrimony (the only possible way to sanction sexual expression from the Christian point of view), it seems that most men do not approach their marital duties with any ardour:

"In practically every instance the religiously active groups engage in marital intercourse less frequently than the religiously inactive groups. There are frequencies in the inactive groups which are between 20 and 30 per cent higher than the frequencies in the religiously active groups of the same age and educational level."

In this regard, Kinsey notes that the average frequencies of sexual outlet for the human male are distinctly below those which are normal among some other anthropoids, and which would probably be normal in the human animal if there were no restrictions upon his sexual activity. These restrictions -- i.e. social pressures, specific laws, attitudes, ideals and other restraints -- are primarily religious in their origin; or so he concludes from the data outlined above. Furthermore,

"The Church...exerts a wider influence on even non-devout individuals, by way of the influence it has had throughout the centuries upon the development of the sexual mores of our Western European-American culture. The religious codes have always and everywhere been the prime source of those social attitudes which, in their aggregate, represent the sexual mores of all groups, devout or non-devout, church going or non-church-going, rational, faithful to a creed, or merely following the custom of the land." (my emphasis).

"The fact of having made sex into a problem is the major negative effect of Christianity" -- if this is true, and I believe the evidence above suggests it, it will be interesting to speculate why. I hasten to add, lest I disappoint my more sanguine readers, that what follows will not be a theologically disquisition, an exercise for which I am prepared neither by inclination nor by training. In any case, theology is to the study of religion what the principals of ethical business practice are to the dealings of our more rapacious capitalists -- both the former are purely academic exercises, best indulged in by those for whom any other sort of exercise might prove fatal. I suspect some will counter that the system of belief which I attack no longer represents the teaching of intelligent Christians, and that Christian history contains many protests against it. This is unimportant. The older, more deeply rooted attitudes persist, and "it is with the consequences on the public attitude toward sexual conduct, rather than on the intention of the teachers, that our estimate of Christianity as a socio-sexual influence must rest."

What have we so far? We know that historically the Christian religion has placed the regulation of sexual conduct in the forefront of its ethical system, we discover that those people who are considered today to be most truly Christian also consider most sexual expression to be sinful, we note that even within the bonds of marriage, those most committed to one of the Judeo-Christian religions are those least likely to have sex, even with their spouses. In effect, sex is a 'problem' -- not only for the devotees of these particular superstitions, but for everyone raised in a Christian environment and blessed with a Christian education, and that is most everyone in Europe and the Americas today. Once again, why?

It is a complex, perplexing area. However, I shall offer the reader certain suggestions, more in the hope of inciting her/him to independent study and/or concern with the topic than of providing solutions. One such suggestion [Sex Energy, Robert S. de Ropp] posits that the Freudian Thanatos (death wish) finds a variety of expressions at a cultural level, and in our particular culture it finds expression in the suppression of sexuality -- the instrument of suppression being the Christian religion. The author notes that other cultures have been completely free of the attitudes of guilt which circumscribe free sexual expression for us, but that these groups have exemplified the 'death wish' through particularly vicious inter-tribal wars, collections of absurd and inhibiting taboos, or sacrifices of a peculiarly excessive sort. It is tempting to place the blame on a superego operating on a cross national scale, and there is material here for further speculation, but one can already anticipate certain objections -- for example, our western culture, if it is the victim of a collective Death Wish, cer-

tainly finds the suppression of sexuality insufficient to express it. We need only think of our own series of insane wars and our mindless destruction of the environment to realize that if Thanatos has a collective expression, it is not exhausted in one area.

Another intriguing suggestion [The Future of an Illusion, Freud] is that religion is the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity, and one that arises out of the Oedipus complex. Of course, an obsessional neurosis brings with it obsessional restrictions, and it is not surprising that some of these restrictions should be directed towards regulating sexual activity. The Oedipus complex, after all, is generated from a state of sexual anxiety, so it does not seem too outlandish to suppose that religion, as obsessional, should pay particular attention to the sex lives of its adherents. In this respect, Christianity seems a particularly model neurosis; one deserving a prominent place in any text book of psychopathology. But the theory leaves unanswered the question of why the regulation of sexual conduct assumes so prominent a place in the Christian religion, while other creeds have scarcely troubled themselves with the topic.

I shall not attempt to elaborate beyond this point, and am content to leave the reader with the seeds of speculation rather than the heavy harvest of dogma.

One question remains.

Was Christ a cocksucker? Why this particular question? Is this merely an experiment in yellow journalism by a writer from whose pen one has come to expect a more restrained prose?

No.

It is an illustration of what I have been contending in this article -- that Christian conviction is incompatible with healthy sexual attitudes and experiences. Most of the people who have been faced with this question have been either openly a little shocked, or have transformed their shock into disdain for a question passed off as rather childishly blasphemous. As well, these are people who are among the more enlightened of their generation, and by most objective standards well free of the coils of Christianity. If, then, as we so vigorously maintain, cocksucking as an act of love between two men is a completely beautiful, healthful and vital experience, it seems rather peculiar that the suggestion of Christ's participation in this act should provoke an almost instinctual response of shock and disgust. This reaction might serve to remind us what *aristocrats* most of us are on the liberated scene, and in what areas we might concentrate future speculation -- I suspect, for example, that the question "Did Christ fuck Mary Magdalen?" would shock even a homosexual mind far less than the question I have posed, and if this is indeed true, it illustrates that at a very basic level, a level permeated still by the values of a Christian upbringing, we are uncertain as to whether gay is just as good as straight.

continued next page



If you happen to be a Christian and a male homosexual, then for you this is the pertinent question about Christ's sexuality -- and if you accept Christ as man then this question is as relevant as any pertaining to his eating habits, mode of dress, or theological views. Again for the Christian male homosexual that question must be answered unreservedly and instinctively in the affirmative -- else you have compromised yourself in areas most crucial to your personality, inevitably a source of some disquiet. Until you can say, the Lord is my Shepherd and I know He's Gay, your position as both a homosexual and a Christian is merely a statement of compromise and an admission of defeat. It is not enough to say that one's sexuality is irrelevant to one's religious life, that Christ is all-accepting, that he was likely pan-sexual and must be all things to all people. Gays must begin the aggressive manipulation of the symbols which have variously ignored them or been used to oppress them. For the male homosexual who must be Christian this vigorous re-ordering of the symbolic structure must be more than the lukewarm assertion that Christ will accept me as I am. It must be that Christ is as I am; this arid, lifeless symbol is revived by my vital and living sexuality till Christ is as much cocksucker as kind, as much gay as good, as much into rimming as righteousness.

If you are a woman, then very little of this concerns you -- in fact, I fail to see how you could find much solace in a religion whose most illustrious female is revered as much for her virginity as her famous prayer of complete submission before the sexual overtures of the Divine. True, she is now Queen of Heaven, but I suspect that she is rarely consulted before decisions of any moment are taken. It is a position of regal vapidity -- too obviously reminiscent of what is available in this world for any woman to consider preparing herself for it in the next.

I think that at the very basic level I proposed to explore, the relationship between Christianity and sexuality is fairly clear -- it is a relationship in which

sexuality is considered to be intrinsically dangerous and for this reason it needs to be surrounded by a fence of ritualistic prohibitions which make its exercise both infrequent and unfulfilling. Since no normal human being can easily respect these prohibitions, most sexual expression in the Christian west occurs in an atmosphere of guilt; indeed, like homosexuals, Christians of all persuasions can be said to have one thing in common: a sense of guilt refined to an unusually nice degree.

Given this it is with some dismay that we regard such current phenomena as the Jesus people, and the resurgence of interest in astrology, spiritualism and witchcraft -- though the emptying churches give cause for hope. If, with Freud, we regard religion as the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity, then we might flatter ourselves that our present age is witnessing the resolution of that neurosis, and phenomena of the sort I have noted are merely the embers of a blaze already half reduced to ashes. However, I cannot pretend to be particularly hopeful in this regard, and I am certain we shall have to contend with the Christian in ourselves and the Christian presence without for some time to come. The ensuing strain might be alleviated somewhat, however, if men who also profess to be Christian would assimilate the salient points of this article. I cannot but believe that Christianity would, in the years remaining to it, be a finer presence if to the epithets already ascribed to the god of love were added that of "Jesus Christ, Cocksucker." ■

(Quotations obviously not from either *Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male* or *Psychology Today* are from *Sex in Society* by Alex Comfort, Penguin, 1963. The reader might also be interested in referring to *Sex Energy* by Robert S. de Ropp, Delta, 1969).



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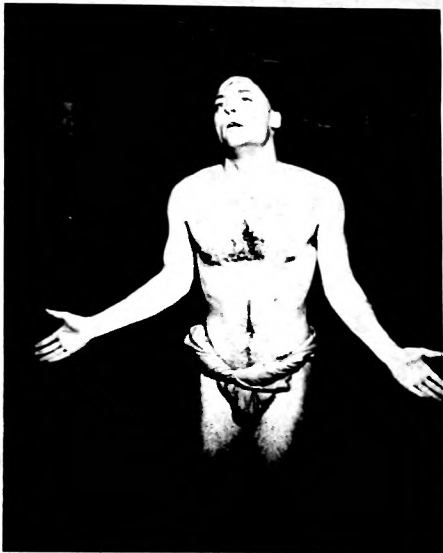
gay in the seminary

It's over ten years since I left the seminary, and most of the memories of that time have gone into that limbo where old memories hide their time. Since *The Body Politic* asked me to write this article, those memories have been seeping back and I've been trying to analyse my feelings about them. On a personal level, I find it hard to believe that I ever was a Christian, that I ever agonized over my gayness wondering if Jesus could love a queer.

If my moral conditioning led me to such self-questioning, some survival instinct led me not to disguise my gayness and even, at times, to flaunt it. But the main thing was that the church and I could never come to grips with my being gay. Everyone knew about it, and everyone tried to pretend it wasn't there. In effect, it was a denial of my existence. This ostrich-like attitude is still prevalent in the church today, despite the large numbers of gay people actively involved in it. For this more than any other reason, I feel the church is destructive and harmful to gay people.

I have decided to remain anonymous because some of the tales I wish to tell could identify others, and I have no wish to blow the whistle on them (although I have blown other things on them). It is relevant, however, to tell you that I was an Anglican of a high-church background. This is important because, of all the major churches, the Anglican is probably the most tolerant of homosexuality. As well, the ritual and liturgy of the Anglican service can be most attractive to imaginative adolescents struggling with their identity and sexuality-- which at that time may be the same thing. The heady smell of incense, the flickering of wax candles, the ringing of bells, the sweet and majestic singing of the choir, the mystical romantic figure of the priest, androgynous in lace and silken vestments, empowered by god himself-- all these things attracted me. And with this, went the pretty, lascivious altar-boys and choir-boys on the one hand; and on the other, the supreme sublimation-- the lovely, limp figure of Christ on the crucifix. But no matter how often I sought Christ in the confessional after bouts of joyous sexual abandon with the other altar-boys, I could never convince myself that I was destined for that state of celibacy the church taught me was my fate. So, I decided to test my vocation to the priesthood and celibacy, and off I went to seminary.

Within a week, I discovered that I was not the only fag in college. I think there were about five of us in my first year, and the numbers changed and grew during sub-



sequent years. There were the closet queens I learned about after I left. We, too, were in the closet, but it was a group closet. We had the bond of a shared secret. We scoured the library for theological essays on homosexuality-- very few and all negative. We made eyes at each other in chapel and discussed the physical charms of the jock seminarians over tea and biscuits in our rooms. Sometimes late at night, we stole into each others' rooms, exchanging caresses, kisses, blow-jobs, and sweet surrenders. But still it was a closeted approach to ourselves, and everyone tried to disguise the fact of being gay. Except, I am proud or ashamed or indifferent to admit, me. I made a career of being outrageous, and like many outrageous persons before me, learned the sad lesson that most people simply will not believe that despite all the theatricality, you are telling the truth. Some of the evangelicals wondered why god did not strike me with his wrath. I suspect they sometimes petitioned awful Jehovah for this, but I warded them off with rosaries and a smart little candle-lit shrine to the virgin, a lady whom I was sure understood my frustrations.

Reaction to me among the professors and other priests was mixed. I amused the top powers; the socialist priests approved my leftist activities. But the majority in their breezy informality of shirt and tie (instead of cassock and collar) muttered darkly. I think they felt I should do penance and seek counsel rather than seek recognition and cause embarrassment. And so life went on as described with the occasional sortie to a gay club or a giddy week-end in New York staying at the Sloane House YMCA and visiting bars in the Village conveniently marked by police signs: "This is a Raided Premises". Then one day came the moment of truth and, in that moment, I failed myself.

(continued on page 25)

our image

Mantreal Main

"Frank is 28. Johnny is 12. A love story you won't see on daytime TV," says the flyer advertising the Montreal screening of the new Canadian film "Montreal Main". A rather unflattering comparison, for "Montreal Main" is much more than a soap opera with a gay theme, and is not nearly so shocking as its distributors would have its audience believe.

An appealing film which sometimes elates by its sensitive character portrayals and striking photography, sometimes despairs by its repressed homosexuality, "Montreal Main" is a real cocktease.

The film might be characterised as a 'homosexual' rather than 'gay' film, since it never carries its theme to its logical conclusion. At the outset of the film, the main protagonist, Frank, a photographer and practising heterosexual (portrayed by Frank Vitale, also director/writer of the film) is fascinated by the homosexuality of his gay artsy friends (played by real gay artsy Montrealers). This motivates him to push his good buddy of six years standing, Bozo (clown par excellence) into an abortive attempt at experimentation, insisting, of course, that this will not mean they are "queers". Bozo's homosexuality seems much more repressed than that of Frank, whom one keeps wishing would finally come out. The scene remains the only overtly sexual scene in the film, and at that, it is presented in a comic light. However, latent homosexuality is rampant, particularly in the highly erotic relationship between Frank and Johnny, which the characters themselves would not perceive as homosexual in nature. However, one tends to forgive this lack of gay identity because of the obvious naivete of the two, the older perhaps being the more naive. At least Johnny seems to know what he wants.

In fact, the overwhelming message of the denial of the rights of children is one of the most powerful aspects of the film. Johnny is continually oppressed by the adult world; by his pseudo-hip parents, obviously paranoid about their son's 'friendship', and eventually by Frank, who easily cedes to conventional morality through fear. Johnny is trapped in an ageist, homophobic world where freedom is impossible.

The actors of "Montreal Main" are real, part of this being attributable to the fact that several of the characters played themselves. The androgynous beauty of Johnny (played by John Sutherland) and the baggy pants boyishness of Frank make them particularly excellent for the two major roles.

The only openly homosexual characters are Peter, hip and bearded, who at one point (while applying his make-up) states that he's obviously the only queen around, and Steve, who engages in a fast-moving neurotic

monologue. They are not traditional stereotypes by any means, but their gay identity is rather superficially sketched. Quick campy scenes pass without development and though the two continually pass judgements on the meat in the street, no gay relationships are seen. These portraits, and the scenes of 'dirty old men' cruising boys in the hot dog joints on Montreal Main (St. Laurent Blvd) do little to counterbalance the latent homosexuality of the primary plot.

Unfortunately, the film is hindered by several technical flaws: the sound track is muddled, scenes jump from one to another in an uneven and too rapid succession, and there are occasional heavy-handed attempts at being arty. However, the photography is excellent. The scenes of Johnny through Frank's eyes are particularly brilliant; the sensual though latent character of their relationship comes across beautifully. The shots of Montreal are also very effective; it is pleasing to see a film for once in an obviously Canadian and familiar setting.

Unfortunately, distribution in Canada has been limited, even though the film was partially financed by the Canada Council and the Canadian Film Development Corporation. As is too often the case, the film was first successful in the New York 'underground' circuit. However, as both a very beautiful film and one of English Canada's first 'homosexual' films, it is one which every Canadian gay filmgoer should see.

Ron Dayman

Such is Life

It was a little hard to believe, but nonetheless, there it was: a drag show complete with wigs, gowns, and sequins, televised nationally on the CBC. The programme, one segment in a series entitled "Such is Life", was an examination of 'female impersonators'.

The programme was neatly divided into three parts. The first segment featured a glittering fashion show in Toronto's Quinsimo Club. The commentators enthusiastically pointed out that each contestant had made his/her own gown and accessories. There were even one or two rather gushy asides about how wonderful it was that people could "do their own thing".

Here followed an interview with three of the contestants. The male interviewer, noticeably nervous, was nonetheless able to come up with various penetrating questions relating to the undergarments of the interviewees. Those being interviewed, however, must be given credit for their intelligent and straightforward responses to what were sometimes rather nosy questions. One transvestite in particular was outstanding in his/her defense of the right to cross-dress in public, in face of claims by both the interviewer and the other contestants that it was acceptable to appear as a woman for "professional" reasons, but should not be done in the streets.

The final part of the programme involved an interview with a (formerly) male transsexual who had undergone a sex change operation. The basic thrust of this portion of the programme was to point out the distinctions between homosexuals, transvestites, and transsexuals.

On the whole, the programme was positive in its presentation. There was no suggestion of anti-gay or anti-transvestite attitudes on the part of the producers, who valiantly strove to create for the CBC an aura of liberation and tolerance. In fact, one might well have concluded from the programme that liberation had finally arrived. After all, it's not every day one can see a man impersonating Liza Minnelli on TV. And, in a very limited way, the programme probably was a kind of media breakthrough. However, the CBC's view of the world of the female impersonator was far from complete. The programme made no attempt whatever to point out that transvestites and transsexuals are often the victims of the crudest and cruellest forms of discrimination. Such, too, is life.

Tom Warner



photo by Gerald Barnes

Animal Liberation is here! (Seen in a Toronto pet shop)

our image

Outrage

On October 6th, the American television network, ABC, aired what is perhaps the most insidious programme on homosexuality to date. Entitled "Outrage", the programme was an episode in the "Marcus Welby" series, and was centered around the rape of a teenage student by his science teacher.

Opposed strenuously by gay activists in the U.S., the network agreed to delete the more sensational aspects of the episode, but refused to cancel the airing. As a consequence, a number of advertisers withdrew their commercials, and two local affiliates (Boston and Philadelphia) refused to carry the show. Nonetheless, millions of Americans got another booster shot of homophobia.

Take for instance the father of the boy telling Welby that "all those people" should be put away, without the slightest clarification from the good doctor that "those" people are not rapists. Or the mild disclaimer from the investigating officer that *homosexuality* was not the crime in question, a revelation so neatly sandwiched between two dramatic episodes that its point was almost entirely lost. Then of course there was the predatory chase which the boy-- twitching and sweating-- relives in nightmare, while recovering from rectal surgery.

The executives at ABC know the subtlety of their media. They knew what they were doing in airing this piece of hate propaganda. They were exploiting a controversial topic for ratings, a topic which, in middle America-- Dr. Welby's clientele-- is little understood and much feared. ABC was simply reinforcing the stereotype of gay men as (or potentially as) defilers of youth and thus, potentially dangerous. It was on ABC's part a calculated policy, entirely anti-gay in nature. There can be no other interpretation, and U.S. gays must respond accordingly.

The show was aired in Canada over cable hook-ups with the U.S. Our task is to prevent its recurrence on Canadian networks and summer re-run schedules.

Herb Spiers



photo by Gerald Hammon

The Unfinished Darryl Tonkin

Image. How does an artistperson (Darryl Tonkin is an artistperson) deal with image? The image I speak of is the returned image. How does an artist deal with the thing he has created? He sees Thing again, and Thing is Real. An abyss (classical) being made larger. The world becomes weary. The artistperson is destroyed.

Yes, I have criticized art. It is not enough. What else I don't know. My credentials: a sex-pained to sex-witty mind, such a history, a few poems and a will to something else.

KAA Gallery, Nov. 11-29. The opening comes before the show.

The Monstre (self-defined) has become human. Last time (spring) he showed us in some very important paintings an entire world sex male universe. That rather depressed certain members of this benign little group. Now he shows us his life. The Unfinished Darryl Tonkin?

A series of things. Glimpses. Pieces of light and dark from the cinema (film's movement is often called life). Autobody. Autoarrest. Pictures of men and women, his loves. Madonna with Cat. Olivier. Art in arrangement. Around Thing all has become silent. A wish for silence. THERE IS NO USE FOR ART. A LINE. I think I understand. Mostly I accept.

Al(hert/fred) Bensor told me that Andrew Warhol started out as an illustrator for *Amy Vanderbilt's Book of Etiquette*. Gum Rags, Disposal Of.

BooBoo once said to me, "Who ever shall suck my cock shall have eternal life." I am oft to reply, "If it didn't fit, I wouldn't do it so often."

Style by Parker and Johnston. A little here a little there. Sigh.

Ken Elliott



Ex-Love Poem

Then

Your boy's belly that of a swan,
Your touch inviting
Dawn for the lover's bed.

That time is lost.
Closed and fast with knots.

This day
I utter
Past be smashed.
Love be cast gone.

Yet in truth
Your form,
Half gone,
Still claims me.

Peter Pehrson

books

Religious Roots of the Taboo on Homosexuality; a Materialist View, John Lauritsen, pub. privately, 1974, 75¢.

The contemporary upsurge in the gay liberation struggle (from 1969 to the present) has generated two rarely elaborated but seemingly contradictory opinions on the origins of homophobia, the fear of homosexuality which fuels the engines of gay oppression.

One opinion, the universalist position, is that homophobia occurs in all known societies and that it varies from one to another only in its severity. Like the subjugation of women (according to some), the oppression of gays is analysed as an immediate product of a pattern of social and economic organisation, the patriarchal family. Indeed, the two oppressions are often viewed as variations on a single theme and are traced back to the prehistoric species-wide overthrow of an earlier, less oppressive social order. Proponents of the universalist position support the idea that there exists a special connection between the feminist and gay struggles.

The other opinion, the particularist position, regards homophobia as a characteristic of some societies, but by no means of all or even of the majority of them. Supporters of this view attempt to discredit the homophobia rampant in Western society by contrasting it with the healthy sexual attitudes of other societies; most often, classical Greece is the contrasting example. They contend that 'antihomosexual attitudes and practices are limited in space and time, and derive from particular moral traditions' (Lauritsen's words, my italics). Thus, homophobia is blamed on the establishment of Christianity as a universal religion.

The universalist position has been argued in print, to my knowledge, only in The Effeminate Manifesto, and not at all persuasively. The particularist position has appeared only fragmentarily or as an assumption, in such works as Churchill's *Homosexual Behavior Among Males*.

John Lauritsen's pamphlet is the first published presentation with supporting evidence of the particularist position on the genesis of homophobia; it marks a significant advance in the intellectual development of the gay liberation movement. Thoughtfully organised, lucid in expression, and appended with inviting ancillary material, the writing flows, interrupted only by interesting digression or engaging aside (I was especially struck by Lauritsen's speculation that Lot's wife -- she is not accorded the dignity of a name in the biblical tale -- in looking back at Sodom, was entertaining late doubts about Yahweh's moral judgement, and for that was turned to salt).

But in presenting an extreme version of the particularist position, Lauritsen reveals its inadequacy as an instrument of theory. He seems to say that homophobia is the unique property of those societies informed by Judaism and Christianity:

"The Taboo, as we shall see, is a theological conception of Judeo-Christianity."

"The antihomosexuality taboo was born among the ancient Hebrews."

"...Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire. From this point begin the sufferings of homosexuals on a world scale."

If Lauritsen means what he appears to mean, he is probably wrong. Even the weaker claim, characteristic of the particularist position, that there are at least some societies which are not homophobic, appears to be in doubt. The clichés about classical Greece stand sorely in need of reexamination; only one variety of homosexuality, pederasty, seems to have enjoyed unqualified respectability among the Greeks and, I believe, some city-states punished homosexual acts as cruelly as the Hebrews. We must remain suspicious of any claim that a particular society is free of homophobia.

Lauritsen's thesis, that the ubiquitous homophobia of Western society originated with the Hebrews seems not to be sustained by the evidence offered. True, wherever Christianity takes hold, homophobia appears. But it is not evident that Christian homophobia has its roots in the Hebrew element of Christian tradition. Islam and Christianity concur in their reverence for the Old Testament, yet Islamic society does not seem to be as viciously homophobic as our own.

But even granting for the sake of argument that Lauritsen is correct in stating that "the Christians carried forward the Jewish sexual code", it is still necessary to admit that the evidence for Hebraic homophobia is somewhat shaky. Nowhere in the Old Testament is homosexuality singled out as uniquely detestable. The death penalty is prescribed for homosexual acts, but this provision has to be considered in the context of a severe legal code which, as Lauritsen himself admits, inflicts capital punishment for some three dozen crimes.

Perhaps we should at least entertain the notion that the roots of Christian homophobia in the traditions and conditions of the classical world, to which Christianity so readily adapted. Long before any Greek or Roman had heard of the Hebrews or Christianity, Plato and then Zeno and the Stoics had begun to divert attention away from the material world, away from the body, away from sexuality. Although these were men of a privileged class, the deteriorating political and economic conditions of succeeding centuries led to the dissolution of traditional beliefs pushed people of all classes, especially in the cities, towards rejection of the body and belief in the spirit. Christianity simply used the Old Testament as the pretext for homophobic tendencies already present among its adherents and their leaders.

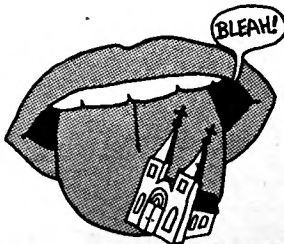
Although I believe that Lauritsen is in error in taking the particularist position on the genesis of homophobia and in tracing its Christian manifestations back to the Hebrews, it is not my intention to detract from his work in any way. The appearance of his pamphlet is to be welcomed as an important and necessary step towards clarifying the issues raised here and a significant contribution to our evolving understanding of gay oppression and liberation.

Ken Popert

Loving Women Loving Men; Gay Liberation and the Church, edited/authored by Sally Gearhart and William R. Johnson, Glide Publications, 1974, 165 pages, \$6.95

A decade of attitude change by homosexuals towards the church is documented in this anthology. The first essay is an account of consultation which took place prior to the formation of the Council on Religion and the Homosexual in 1964. The council resulted from paternalistic concern of church men in San Francisco for the "problem" of homosexuality. Although homophile leaders who were approached responded rather more critically than popular mythology about homophile leaders might allow us to expect, the formation of the council served only to defuse potential hostility in a gentle and harmless discussions on "how we view each other."

Ten years later, William Johnson, the first openly declared Gay in the Christian church, represents the new initiative being taken by Gay people still within the institution. He insists that the church con-



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front yet another of its failures to be the life-enhancing, love-giving force it has often claimed to be. Although Johnson realizes that the church as constituted is thoroughly heterosexual, grounded securely in a belief in marriage and the nuclear family, he feels that he and other Gay church men will be able to alter its patriarchal and hierarchical forms. The sheer magnitude of the task is demonstrated by his twenty-seven point programme for change.

But he stops short of the important next step taken by Gearhart, who is armed with an even stronger feminist perspective. She sees feminism as the vital link between lesbians and heterosexual women, united to create totally new alternatives to male-dominated society. Gearhart believes that the patriarchal, masculinist, hierarchical, authoritarian attitude of the church is fundamentally incompatible with feminism. The church cannot change. In order to be acceptable to feminism and Gay liberation, the church would have to dismantle itself and reconstruct its very essence. Inconceivable! Institutions do not consciously commit suicide. The "power-over" mind-set is intrinsic to a belief in god-the-father, an obedience to greater authority, and it is inimical to the potentialities of same-sex relationships, which are a paradigm for the future.

Robert Treese's contemporary biblical perspective reprinted here is useful in summarising the contents of D.S. Bailey's *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition* (a book, incidentally, whose reprinting is long overdue). Treese deals with the biblical references to homosexuality and argues that few of them can really be used to justify the church's anti-gay stance. But his analysis is unquestioningly christian, infused with a we-can-clear-this-up-together-with-a-little-help-from-the-holy-spirit attitude. Okay, so the Sodom story was based on mistranslations of the verb 'to know' and the references to temple prostitutes couldn't have meant homosexuals because that would be a contradiction in function in a fertility cult, and Paul's epistles, being time-caught and culturally limited, must be interpreted on this topic as they apparently are on every other. Are we therefore to believe that it has all been a gigantic mistake? Not very likely, and as Gearhart says, "no amount of insistence that christian love has transcended deuteronomical law can outweigh the tangible evidence of the world's experience of Christianity" (and over a rather convincing length of time too!).

The inevitability of this conclusion makes the genuine concern and effort of the authors more poignant because so destined for failure. The chapter on the movement in the church records the growing number of individual Gays who are doggedly chipping away at various parts of the ecclesiastical edifice. It is a chronicle of tiny victories, frustrating compromises, "condemnation-first-justice-second" statements wrung from reluctant denominational bodies, and energy-sapping defeats. The chapter is useful in reminding us that we cannot easily attribute monolithic views to every person and every group lumped under one umbrella term "the church". But it reinforces the impression that there are inherent rigidities in all the institution's forms which no number of compassionate, loving, dedicated individuals within it can overcome.

But the basic assumption of the authors is that the law and its discriminatory enforcement will not readily change until the church reconsiders its attitudes towards Gayness and begins to exert influence to change the laws. The church has a responsibility to bring about this change. They are right, of course. Gay liberation cannot yet ignore the christian churches. For the sake of those still growing up under their influence, we must press the churches to the very limits of their "response-ability".

It is clear that the church has had a pervasive influence on the lives of Johnson and Gearhart. The very titles of their respective chapters echo this: "The Good News of Gay Liberation," and "The Miracle of Lesbianism." Gearhart, closer to final abandonment, strikes an almost elegiac note at the close. But the message which ends the book is unmistakable: the church must go.

Edward Jackson



Dolores Klaich - Justick Photo

Woman Plus Woman: Attitudes Toward Lesbianism, Dolores Klaich, New York, Simon and Shuster, 1974, 257 pages, \$10.00

As far as it goes, Dolores Klaich's *Woman Plus Woman* is an intelligent and highly readable study of historical and contemporary attitudes to lesbianism. Like Bettie Wysor in *The Lesbian Myth*, Ms. Klaich combines research and personal interviews to clear up popular misconceptions about lesbians, and includes a brief and fascinating survey of famous gay women in history.

Not exactly a novel approach--and one with several inherent disadvantages. To begin with, it is difficult to discuss the basis of current attitudes to lesbianism outside the broader context of a consideration of homophobia in general. Thus, the book's major theoretical concerns are little more than restatements of what has been written many times before, and are not exclusively relevant to lesbianism.

As well, the examination of homophobia (male or female) is a topic so extensive that any readable attempt at coverage must be either superficial or highly selective. Wisely, I think, Ms. Klaich has chosen to concentrate on psychology's contribution to sexual prejudice, sparing us a tortuous rehashing of biblical injunctions and biological misconceptions of 'nature'. More interesting than instructive, this section assesses the writings of Krafft-Ebing and Freud, including such spicy details as Freud's frustration and only partly required love for Bilda Doolittle, his famous lesbian patient/protegee. Ms. Klaich's stinging critique of Frank Caprio's *Female Homosexuality* is almost reason in itself for reading this book, especially the revelation that one of his sources was "Life Romances" magazine!

The three interviews I found most rewarding and insightful. Ms. Klaich's questions are direct and sometimes fairly penetrating; though she might have interviewed at least one woman with a more radical consciousness. What did emerge again and again from these interviews was a heartening sense of self-confidence at coming out and finally satisfying that need to relate emotionally, which so many straight men were incapable of filling.

Ms. Klaich's position on sexual politics and gay militancy is unclear, and on the whole, rather disappointing. Too often the desire "not to be identified by what (one) is about sexually" is expressed with no comment on the author's part. And one wonders exactly what point is being made in such apologetic assertions as this: "Sappho was a poet who loved women. She was not a lesbian who wrote poetry."

As well, I would have been interested in more discussion of the reaction of gay women to the feminist movement, rather than their mere dislike of the life-

books

style of the 'lesbian ghetto'. Despite its timidity in certain areas, however, *Woman Plus Woman* remains an informative and worth-while study, particularly for those who haven't yet covered the basics.

Robert Trow

Religion & Sexism: Images of Women in the Jewish and Christian Traditions, Rosemary Radford Ruether (ed.), New York, Simon and Schuster, 1974, 354 pp., \$4.50 pbk.

In the history of twentieth century thought so far, perhaps no one is more woman-negative than Freud. Even most women psychoanalysts have adhered to his theory that the psychosexual development of women is determined by her anatomy. Her psychological characteristics and social role are derived from this fact. Yet Freud wasn't all that cocksure about women, or so we must assume from his musings about what, after all, women wanted.

Although skillfully formulated, this theory still boils down to the ancient view of woman's body as 'la bête noire', I say 'still' because, as this collection of essays details, the corpus of the argument against the female sex originates in the image of her body as defiled, and hence defiling. The difference then, between the psychoanalytic view of woman and that of the western religious tradition is the difference between, say, brass and copper: the former is an alloy of the latter, supplemented by a few other base substances.

For a dozen years I had the benefit of a catholic education, three quarters of which was spent with women of the cloth and the remainder with priests. The men of god got by far the better deal. The nuns laboured religiously at their teaching assignments, but when time came for our reckoning -- report card -- that was a man's job, the pastor's prerogative. Oh sure, our franciscan sisters got to receive communion first on Sundays and got to sit closest to the holy tabernacle, but they got nothing else. In high school (a seminary) the nuns waited on the priests. That constituted part of my image of woman -- the roman catholic church's handmaids.

My impression of women then was partly an outgrowth of a religious tradition whose misogyny roots are deep and far-reaching. Even to the well-adjusted heathen, the significance of the religious image of woman can not be dismissed because its roots sprouted into various shoots of oppression. To the degree that woman is an historical idea, the history of her oppression is recorded and transmitted through the images by which she has been perceived. History passes on, but it is all too often buried in the present. Thus it is of some consequence to understand our culture's religious conception of women if we are to understand the sources of her oppression.

In this volume, our understanding of woman's place in religion is tutored by an almost all-female faculty (and their one male colleague is more than 'sympathetic'). The research is fascinating and stimulating, thorough and honest; it is good working material. The quality of their writing is equal to their purpose in exposing religion's crucifixion of woman, a sin as yet unredeemed.

These essays range over the image of women from the old testament to the contemporary theology of Karl Barth and Paul Tillich. It is far from common that all the articles in a thematic collection are worthwhile. These are.

The editor's contribution ("Misogynism and Virginal Feminism in the Fathers of the Church") and Eleanor McLaughlin's ("Equality of Souls, Inequality of Sexes: Women in Medieval Theology") are at once historically important and theoretically rich. Ruether's is important because she shows that the depersonalization and, objectification of women in catholicism took one of two forms: either she was the receptacle for what in effect was male masturbation, or she was the object for creating a new object: a child. This "puritan-prurient" image of woman was not entombed with Saints Augustine and Jerome. Today's "sexual liberation" has indeed depuritanized women's sexual image but only to the promotion of prurience. Presently, from *Playboy* to

peepshows, women are ogled at as bodies. Their humanity remains denied.

Men and women, equally, are made in the image of god. In paradise, as in Christ, "there is neither male nor female". But not in the real world of institutionalized worship. McLaughlin's survey of medieval theology reveals that women then, more so than now, knew a double standard which fenced their freedom. Two lifestyles comprised the choice of alternatives: marriage or virginity (and the latter preferably in a cloister), both of which reeked of androcentrism and patriarchal values. This phenomenon was the direct result of the "demonizing of sex and especially of female sexuality" which, according to theological reasoning, brought about man's debasement. That woman's sexuality was bedeviled is seen in the theological belief that Beelzebub and his vassals were as attracted to the menstrual blood of women as religion is to sophistry. As for the cloistered life of virginity, Pope Boniface VIII's Bull of 1295 -- *Periculosus* -- forbade nuns the right to even momentarily leave their convents without prior permission from their local bishop.

With Luther and protestant theology the lot of woman in marriage was seen to improve. There was, of course, a proviso in this: namely, that women's weaknesses and failings were transcended only because of 'womb and birth'. Anatomy is salvation. Protestantism brought no change in the social status of women. And in contemporary protestant theology, Barth sees the master/servant relationship as normative for men and women because it parallels that of god's relationship to man. Guess who's master. Paul Tillich, almost alone among theologians, writes of women with some awakened consciousness of their oppression by religion.

In the old testament a woman's sexuality was deemed to be the property of first her father and then her husband. From this fundamental guiding tenet the western religious tradition and feminism have been in contradiction. Before looking for its resolution one further point needs voicing.

What is the lesbian image in this tradition? We know of course that it cannot be positive, yet we still need details. This volume does absolutely nothing to shed light on the problem. Homosexuality is mentioned once in passing, the author speculating that the medieval monastic tracts against woman's sexuality may have been a projection of the monk's own repressed homoeroticism. But if that were the case (and why not?), would not the libidinal attractions within the cloisters be homoerotic as well? This apparent absence of the need to discuss lesbianism in the religious images of women itself reflects the extent of the oppression of woman's sexuality in Judaism and Christianity.

As I reflect upon the contents of this selection of articles, it becomes increasingly difficult for me to comprehend how any woman with any degree of feminist consciousness could find the western religious tradition redeemable. Hennings calls for a revolution within the catholic church. But this fails to recognize that feminism and institutionalized religion are antithetical (as is gayness and religion). The revolution of which she speaks would not be one within the church but over it, because to revolutionize the church through feminism is necessarily to destroy it as a church. Why?

Because feminism must question any vestige of male prerogative, and western religion rests upon the ultimate in male hegemony: god as man and man as god. The question then is strategic. Do feminists want to employ their energies in church reform or are their efforts best exerted in political, economic and social action? This is a question as well for gay liberation.

I realize that the question of religion is not always a matter of rational and scientific inquiry -- as Jung saw. It can be at once magnetic and mysterious, mutually reinforcing. In its institutionalized forms, depending on an ideology of faith as a must, religion can have a force which binds. Yet it is also a force which blinds, even in the face of overwhelming evidence of the kind to be found in this book. That the western religious tradition has been blind to the rights and needs of women is indisputable. In response, women should turn their backs to it, save to face it in combat when necessary. And so too with gays.

Herb Spiers

lesbian . . . (from page 18)

heads in subjugation. They are only now learning what it means to look with love eyeball-to-eyeball with equals.

What can it mean to individuals in the church that they must begin to conduct the church's funeral, that they must themselves be agents of the church's death? It must mean at least risks never taken before. It might mean, on an action level, throwing out the phallic pulpit that sets one person higher than and apart from another. Or it might mean tearing out puritanical pews and putting in comfortable chairs and pillows for being-with rather than being-under. Then the otherwise unused building can become a crash-pad or a refuge for transients -- surely the church should be in use every hour of every week in the shelter and care of human beings.

It might be a good thing to use a generic "she" and "woman" or "womankind" in all our conversations for a decade or two instead of the masculine generic so men can begin to understand what it feels like to be made invisible.

You pastors can refuse to preach anymore; refuse to be the enlightened shepherds of a blind flock. You can also suggest some primitive Christianity in the form of pooled salaries and resources in our congregation -- which would be divided according to need. All of this, of course, is with full knowledge that if you try any of it you're likely to be spewed out of the mouth of the church (ironically because you are not lukewarm). Then perhaps you can come into the streets and ghettos of the secular world where the gospel is being discovered and lived.

But to make such changes-- if you should succeed-- is still to treat only the symptoms. We don't get anywhere towards toppling the church structure until we articulate loud and clear some fundamental assumptions.

1. That traditional Christian teaching is anti-life; it is antithetical to any liberation ideology; its enfleshment, Christian practice, is not enfleshment at all but one of the Western world's most eloquent expressions of the fascist mind-set.
2. That traditional Christian concepts are the constructs of male thinking and depend for their perpetuation upon the myth of male superiority.
3. That because the submission of women is essential to the church's functioning, the church has a vested interest (economic and psychological) in perpetuating the institutions that most oppress women: the nuclear family and the sex-role socialization of children.

When we admit these things, then we can commit ourselves to one of only two paths: either toppling the hierarchy completely (which action would be the destruction of the church), or packing up whatever shred of personal worth we've got left and leaving the church entirely-- hopefully in a hell-raising burst of glory that in itself may educate other Christians.

So, as a woman, as a Lesbian, I invite you not to attempt reform of the church. I invite you either to destroy it or to desert it. Personal integrity allows no other alternatives. ■

Reprinted with the author's permission from *The Gay Alternative*, summer 1974 (#7).

What god has in store for you...



Tortures for the sin of Lust, from Taddeo di Bartolo's fresco of Hell at San Gignano. An adulteress is lashed by a horned demon, while a sodomite is impaled on a stake from anus to mouth; one end of the stake is held in the mouth of another homosexual, while a devil turns the other end over the fire.

gay seminarian (from page 17)

There was a forum on Homosexuality at the University, with a panel comprised of a representative of the New York Mattachine Society, a sociologist, a theologian, and others. It caused a sensation (this was, remember, over a decade ago). A record attendance of over 2,000 was set. Unbelievable statements like, "I'm not one but some of my best friends are..." were made. But except for a few Sodom and Gomorrah and sickness statements from the theologues and the shrink, it was good-natured, friendly and positive in the resolution that homosexuals were not a danger to society, and ought to be allowed to live their own lives. I felt elated and proud. The next day in a New Testament class, the professor railed against the forum, its resolution, and the large attendance, saying that a forum on World Hunger would not draw so well.

I conceded the last was probably true, but that all that meant was that homosexuality more closely affected the people at the university than hunger. After the class, I told him I was surprised at his attitude, which he justified by telling me that when he was a parish priest, a 16 year old boy of his parish had been seduced by a man and had become a prostitute. I replied that seduction did not automatically lead to prostitution, and opined that he would not condemn heterosexuality if it had been a girl seduced.

Well, I had put up some defence, but I was sickened by my inability to simply say, "Father, I am a homosexual and others of us here are homosexuals, and you are wrong no matter how many quotations from Paul or church authorities you can dig up. And you have no right to talk to us or about us in that manner." But I didn't say it, and because I didn't, everything soured inside me, and shortly thereafter, I left the seminary for good.

About a year ago, I came to the city where I now live, a city thousands of miles from that of the seminary. One of the Anglican parish priests here is a man who was at seminary with me—a homosexual man. Now, he is married with two children. But he is homosexual, and looks longingly at my boyfriends on the rare occasions we meet. I think I disturb him. Recently, he said to me "Keep in touch. I always think you are going to be murdered in some dark alley and I won't know about it." This closeted priest with whom I used to go for gay weekends in New York has that distorted a picture of my life-style as a gay person. I think these distortions have come about because of the criminal refusal of the church to look at homosexuals as they are, its refusal to accept perspectives other than its own, and, most of all, its refusal to admit the facts of the variety of the human experience. ■

letters (from page 3)

is exciting but, oh my god, you will go to hell after it and once there it is all sex without fulfillment. (Guess which film will be released first for general screening.)

So what does this all have to do with the purpose of this letter? I think it is indicative of the (maybe unavoidable) trap TBP might be falling into. In an attempt to break through to a larger audience TBP, neglecting its primary goal of sexual liberation, is trying simultaneously to cater to women's liberation, to the people in the ghetto, to the moral outrage of liberals (when it reports the denial of civil rights for a minority.)

Women will consider TBP's attempt as tokenism, those

in the gay ghetto will turn to the ad page and conclude that the Advocate's ads are kickier, liberals will fully agree, but only so long as sanctioned taboos remain secure. Anyone who doubts the last point need look no farther than the Star's recent editorial.

TBP has certainly been successful in balancing its ideological affiliations and perhaps at this time this is the only possible approach for a gay journal in this country. But a balancing act is always a precarious proposition, and I have serious doubts about the course the paper is pursuing.

Richard Mehringer
Toronto

classifieds (from page 38)

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Gay and Feminist Literature Resource List Free! Valuable Guide in obtaining Books, Pamphlets, etc. Write: Southern Gay Liberator, P.O. Box 2118, Boca Raton, Florida 33432. Self-addressed and STAMPED envelope a must. Bookstores: Send most recent catalogue and get listed on our third list free.

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A Poetry Journal of Male Love. On sale at Androgyny Bookshop, Montreal; Gotham Book Mart, NYC; Grolier Bookshop, Boston; and Nevada Books, Philadelphia.

LOVE POEMS FROM I.S.B.A.

Can you beat it, even the hardened characters licking stamps down in the I.S.B.A. basement were touched when they read the poem that landed in the executive suite one day from a member out in B.C. And then every one in I.S.B.A., the stamp lickers, the application sorters, and the membership list writers, all decided that the poem should be published in "Body Politic". Here it is, think about it, we think it's fine:

When somebody loves you
nothing else can matter:
Skies of grey are good as blue,
half a room's as good as two,
and broken hearts are good as new,
when somebody loves you
really true.

When somebody loves you
everything seems easy,
dull November seems like May
dreary work goes light and gay
and sorry troubles melt away
when somebody loves you
every day.

When somebody loves you
it's a shame to hurt them,
so you lie and say you're true
smile at things they do for you,
and try and love a little too,
when somebody loves you
like I do.

Well, in the next issue we'll get back to our usual dull advertising again. Bye for now. I.S.B.A., Box 142, Skidton Q, Toronto M8T 2S8, the dullest outfit in a gay world.

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classifieds

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Please note that beginning in the next issue, #17, businesses and commercial services will be charged at the new rate of 10¢ per word. Ads for individuals will remain at 5¢ per word.

All replies for ads listing a Drawer Number should be addressed o/o the Body Politic, Box 7289, Stn. A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X9.

friendship

Young gay male, 26, desires friendship and outings with others aged between 24-35 years old. Write Drawer 126.

Gay 135 lbs. 30 yrs. old 5'8", straight apt. versatile, would like to meet tall masc. guys (no fems or B.S.) to share fun, apt. Dixon Isl. area for friendship & good times. Call to rap a while. (416) 248-4527 after 6 wdays. All day Sat. & Sun.

Geenai male, 21, 6', 165 lbs., brown hair, medium build and attractive. The person I'm interested in must be sincere and also looking for a permanent relationship. Please write and tell me about yourself, likes and interests. Photo appreciated. Write George, c/o Drawer 121.

I'm very interested in meeting people. I'm a writer and singer and plan to tour Canada from January to June. Reply to: Mr. Alan Young, Box 69, London, Ohio, 43140, U.S.A.

Transvestite. New in Toronto area. Tall, feame and very attractive. I love to dress, feel and act like a woman in every way. Especially interested in meeting new people for dating, parties, and fun get-togethers. Also welcome make-up, photo, and fashion sessions and just plain talk from all interested parties & other TV's. I'm looking forward to hearing from you. Your correspondence promptly answered. If possible send me a picture if in Toronto. Include phone # for fast get-back. Discretion assured and requested. Write Janet, Drawer 132.

Young European executive, 31, 6'2", 165 lbs., good-looking, living in rural area near Toronto, I am masculine, sensitive and interested in classical music and theatre. Like sunbathing, long talks and nature. I see a friend for a long-lasting relationship with same interests. Drawer 111.

White male, 25, 5'8", 150 lbs., brown hair, medium build, considered very attractive would like to meet a warm, masculine person aged 24 to 30 for a relationship that could be permanent. Am not a barfly but do enjoy a night out occasionally. Like very much to meet a university educated man with interests that extend beyond man hunting. You must be slim to medium build, average to good-looking and able to enjoy a quiet evening at home. Will accept all replies accompanied by a picture and a phone number. Sam c/o Drawer 98.

Bisexual, white, businessman, 47, 5'9, 165, good education, excellent physical shape, interested in meeting/ corresponding with gay/lesbians with similar backgrounds. Drawer 94.

Lonesome cowboy, young and handsome, easy going, well educated, white, has good cowboy, police and leather outfits. Like high cut cowboy boots. Seek other cowboys, truck drivers and cops for lasting friendship and mutual enjoyment. Will share apt. with right guy. Please, no drugs, drinks, fems, fats or hippies—just clean cut white masculine guys. Reply via photo (if possible) and phone to Drawer 117.

Young (23) submissive gay (fr. act./gov. pass.) seeks dominant, hardbuilt, mean-mouthed leather/levi dude (25-32) for training in w/s, bottom worship, related activities. Prefer beard and moustache. Be mean—command me in writing. Lusty photo appreciated. RM 1706, Stong Reg., York St., 4700 Keele, Downsview, Ontario M3J 2X3.

New York executive, European born, early 40's, 6'2", 178 lbs., attractive, masculine but sensitive, sincere distressed. Interested in arts, classical music, theatre, and nature seeks an honest and serious friend in Canada (21 to 45) with similar interests and physique for long-lasting and mutually rewarding relationship. Drawer 140.

Young Englishman downtown. Interests theatre, travel, wishes to meet similar with view to possible (not definite) permanent relationship. Box 1054, Stn. A, Toronto.

MICHIGAN GAY Quiet, friendly, gay — I'm 28, 5'11", 155 lbs., usually French active/Greek passive, well educated, travelled. Sincere and open to many scenes. Jean, Box 31, East Lansing, Mich., 48823, USA.

CHINESE FROM TORONTO 19, 5 ft. 6 inch, 140 lbs. Good-looking and medium built. Seeks sincere possible long relationship with guys of 16-35 based on trust, sincerity, and affection. New to the gay world but willing to learn. Am non-smoker and slight drinker. Considered very sociable and likeable. Do enjoy music weekends at home with music and talks Reply to Drawer 133.

BLACK OR OTHER NATIONALITIES 25 year old white male, 140 lbs., 5'8", green eyes, orig. from S. America, would like to hear about slim guys, pref. black or dark complexion, or other nationalities for friendship and good times. I'm fond of music, travelling, and dancing. Would appreciate replies with photo & phone number. No femes pls. Write to Eduardo c/o Drawer 139.

Artist, writer, 28, 5'8", 135 lbs., attractive, gay male person — would like to meet gay person(s) in Peterborough. 328 Parkhill Rd., W. Peterborough.

Attractive, young professional Oriental male 24, 5'7", light tan complexion slim, masculine, sensitive, thoughtful and humorous sometimes, enjoys outdoor nature, music, paintings, and quiet moments; interested in simple, elegant forms and deep discussion. I seek an attractive, slim or thin young man who enjoys better environment for meaningful friendship. Reply to Drawer 137.

Attractive, masculine young Michigan w/m, former model, TV personality, frequent weekend Toronto visitor Am inexperienced bisexual, athletic, 5'9", 160 lbs., 41" chest, 30" waist Would like to meet masculine w/m to 30, likes sex and will show me Toronto. No drugs, fats. Send details, photo. Box 2603, Detroit, 48231, Michigan, U.S.A.

POSSIBLE DREAM: Serious minded good-natured, young-looking professional man, 35, slim, smooth, attractive, 6 ft., 150, masculine but versatile, seeks compatible, emotionally mature male, 25-35, to share life's many joys—home, garden, books, classical music, plays, art, films, travel, affectionate sex. Photo please. Box 945, Station K, Toronto.

Handsome youth, well-built, well-endowed tired of bars, etc. wants someone for semi-steady relationship. Casual acquaintances are also welcome. Reply to Drawer 127.

homes

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GAY HOUSE. Spaces open in gay house as of December 1st. Good transit & time, \$68 per month basic, plus utilities. Phone 465-1403 after 5 PM.

work

Experienced English producer/songwriter (late thirties) at present with rather stagnant British record company seeks interesting position recording/television in Canada. Please can anyone helping me get into industry over there? Laurie, 23, Sandown Close Cranford, Middlesex, England.

letters

Gay prisoner, 26, 5'10", olive complexion, black Afro, brown eyes, wants to hear from older guys with an open mind. Scorpio, code, versatiles. Seeker lover. Write to: Warren Johnston, 136-559, Box 69, London, Ohio 43140, U.S.A.

Black male, 21 yrs., 5 ft. 11 inches, 175 lbs. I would like very much to correspond with some gay men, that wouldn't mind spending some time in search of a lasting relationship. I am lonely. Reply to: Warren Nash, B-4271, Box 4-6, San Luis, Ontario, Calif., 93409, U.S.A.

Gay prisoner would like to correspond with someone about the scene on the outside. All letters appreciated. Reply to: Clyde L. Creamans, #133-311, Box 787, Lucasville, Ohio, 45646.

other

Driving to Miami Dec. 21, return Jan. 4. Room for extra driver over 21. Reply to Drawer 118.

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(continued on page 25)

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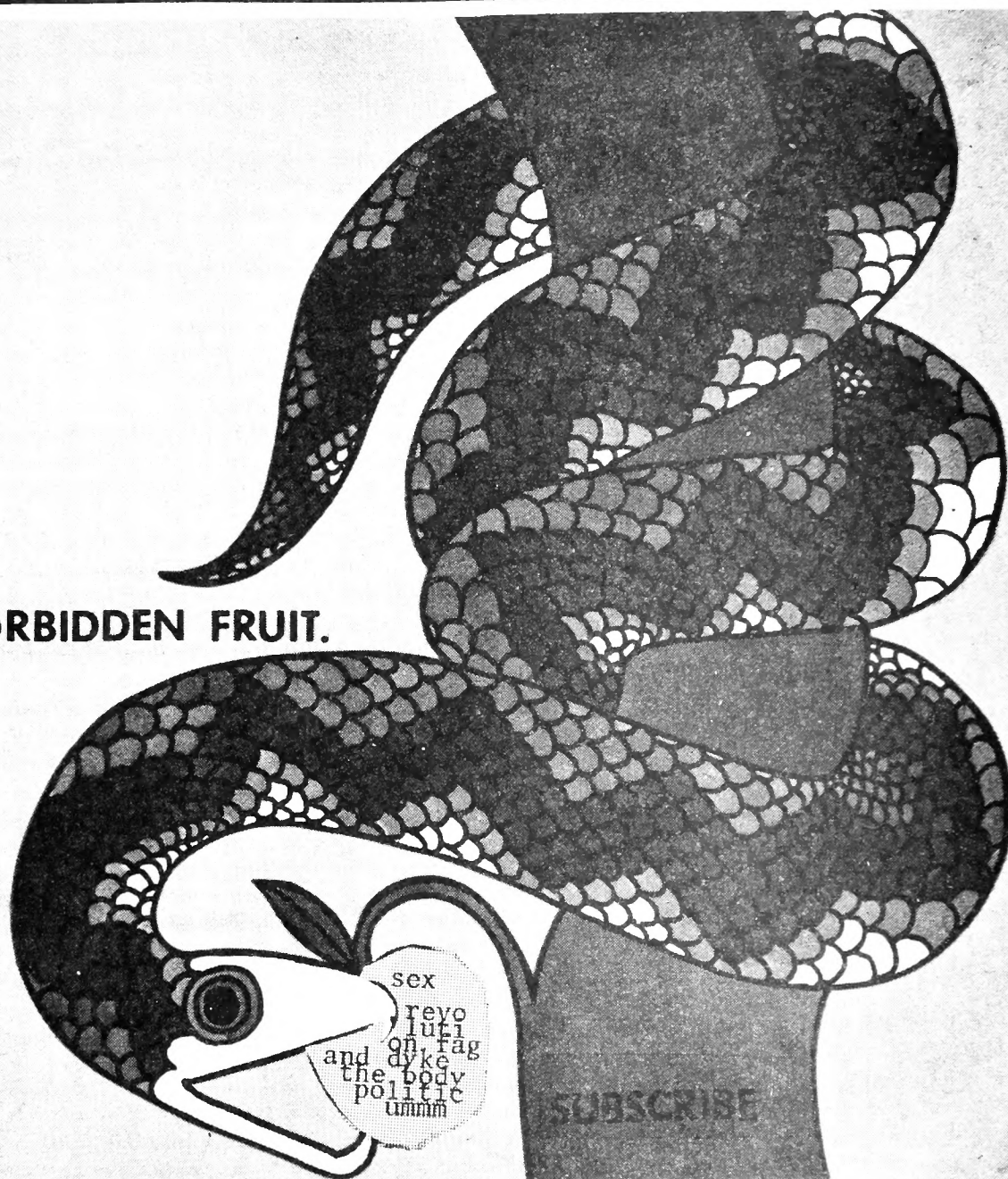
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